

The Road to

Jannah

The Struggle of Muhammad (saw) and the Sahabah (as)

By Sheikh Omar Bakri Muhammad

Ad-Da'wah publications

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The Prophet of Allah (saw) said: "When Allah (swt) created Jannah, He (swt) said to Gabriel (as): "Go and look at it." He (as) went and looked at it, then came and said: 'O my Lord! By Thy might, no one who hears of it will fail to enter it.' He then surrounded it with disagreeable things, and said: "Go and look at it, Gabriel." He went and looked at it, then came and said: 'O my Lord! By Thy might, I am afraid that no one will enter it.'

When Allah created Hell, He said: "Go and look at it, Gabriel." He went and looked at it, then came and said: 'O my Lord! By Thy might, no one who hears of it will enter it.' He then surrounded it with desirable things and said: "Go and look at it, Gabriel." He went, looked at it, then came and said: 'O my Lord! By Thy might and power, I am afraid that no one will remain who does not enter it.'"

[Abu Dawood]¹

¹ Narrated by Abu Hurayra, Hadith No. 4726

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About the Author

Sheikh Omar Bakri Mohammad was born in 1958 in Aleppo, Syria. He has studied the science of Qur'an, hadith, fiqh and so on from childhood in many well noted and respected institutions.

He joined many Islamic movements like Muslim Students, al-Ikhwan (al Tali'ah), Ebad ul Rahman and Hizb ut Tahrir.

He is the author of many books in Arabic and English, including:

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Ahkam al Salah (The rules of prayer)

Ahkam al Nikah (The rules of marriage and divorce)

Ahkam al Boyou' (The rules of transactions)

Khabar al Ahad (The book on single reports)

The duty of Jihad between Mind and Text

How to observe Ramadan

Why Islam declares war against Insurance

Political struggle in Islam

A nation without a cause is like a body without a soul

The way to Palestine

A quick reference to the Islamic economic system

Business and Company Structure in Islam

In addition to being a speaker and khateeb in many mosques, he also has audio and visual tapes, including the commentary on the Qur'an.

Sheikh Omar is currently the Principal lecturer at the London School of Shari'ah where he teaches Usul al Fiqh and Fiqh al Madhahib according to the Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, Hanbali and other Schools of Thought.

Introduction

Innal Hamdu lillaah, Nahmadahu wa Nastaenahu wa Nastaghfirahoo wa Natoobu Ilaah Wa Na' Awothoo billaahi min shurrooree anfusina wa min saiyaati amalina Mayahdee Ilaahu falaa mudhillalah, wa may yudhlil Ilaahu falaaHadeeya lah

Surely all praise and thanks are to Allah, we praise and thank Him and seek His help and ask His forgiveness and repent unto Him. And we seek refuge (help) in Allah from the evil within ourselves and the evil of our actions, He whom Allah guides none can lead astray, and he whom Allah misleads, none can guide.

Bismillahi-r-Rahmani-r-Raheem

The call for the establishment of the Khilafah echoes all around the Muslim and indeed the non-Muslim world today. Mankind has witnessed the oppression of successive Kuffar ideologies, be they communism or capitalism. The Muslims have understood that the murder, rape, pillaging and poverty that exist today do so because of the lack of implementation of Islam. Since the destruction of the Islamic state, oppression has become widespread and every day heralds new types of torture for the Muslim Ummah and indeed for mankind. It is in this atmosphere of awareness and realisation that many Muslims have begun work in the field of da'wah.

The Muslims of today are working to culture the Muslims to speak to the people of power and to ultimately make that breakthrough that will lead to the establishment of the Khilafah. In their minds they have their eyes on accomplishing the feat that the Prophet (saw) and his companions, achieved.

Muadh Ibn Jabal (ra) said: *“Knowledge is a comforting friend in times of loneliness, it is the best companion during travels, and it is the inner friend who speaks to you in your privacy. Knowledge is the discerning proof of what is right and what is wrong, and it is the positive force that will help you surmount the trials of comfort, as well as those of hardships. Knowledge is your most powerful sword against your enemy, and finally, it is your most dignifying raiment in the company of your close companions.”*

For the *daii*² today the knowledge, which as much as any other is their companion during hardship, is the life of Muhammad (saw) during his campaign of Da’wah. The seerah teaches us the atmosphere we can expect when we are carrying this call, the reaction we will receive from the people who want at all costs to make this call fail. Moreover it gives us hope because it teaches us that no matter what odds we will face and what torture will be inflicted upon us we will Inshallah succeed just as the Prophet (saw) and his companions did.

² *Daii* – Propagator of Da’wah, the one who invites

The Mission of Islam

Allah (swt) has indeed blessed mankind with creation, creating us from nothing. In return for the gift of life, and all the blessings that are associated with it, Allah (swt) desires for man solely to turn to Him alone in Worship. For Allah (swt) says,

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

“I (Allah) did not create the Jinn and the Man except to worship Me.”³

In order for mankind to understand the Message of their Lord and the means by which they could fulfil Allah’s (swt) Order, He (swt) sent to mankind numerous Prophets; those who carried a message directly from Allah (swt) became known as Messengers. This continued from the very beginning of time until it culminated in the Prophet Muhammad (saw) who brought with him the last, final and complete Message intended for the whole of mankind. Allah (swt) says,

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ

“Verily, We have sent to every nation a messenger (saying), ‘Worship Allah and avoid false gods (at-Taaghout).’”⁴

³ Al-Qur’an - Surah Az-Zariyat, 51:56

⁴ Al-Qur’an - Surah An-Nahl, 16:36

The Message sent with each Prophet carried the same command, that of the Tawheed of Allah (swt) and the negation of any partners with Him (swt). Allah (swt) says,

إِنَّهُ مَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوَاهُ النَّارُ

*"Indeed, whoever associates anything in worship with Allah then Allah has forbidden Paradise for him, and his abode will be the Fire."*⁵

and,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ

*"Surely, Allah will not forgive the association of partners with Him (shirk), but He forgives (sins) less than that of whomever He wishes"*⁶

Indeed Allah (swt) perfected and completed His call to mankind with the sending of the Messenger Muhammad (saw) who was the best of creation. With him (saw), Allah (swt) sent the Qur'an, a clear message and warning to the whole of mankind,

تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْفُرْقَانَ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ لِيَكُونَ لِلْعَالَمِينَ نَذِيرًا

*"Blessed is He who sent down the furqaan to His slave (Muhammad) that he may be a warner to mankind"*⁷

Furqaan in the Arabic language means a criterion guiding between that which is correct and that which is wrong. The Qur'an thus was thus

⁵ Al-Qur'an - Surah Al-Mai'dah, 5:72

⁶ Al-Qur'an - Surah An-Nisaa, 4:48

⁷ Al-Qur'an - Surah Al-Furqaan, 25:1

sent as a clarification for all matters, and as a guidance for those who heeded its call;

وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تِبْيَانًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ
"...Indeed we sent the Qur'an as a clarification for all matters"⁸

Worshipping Allah

It is important to understand that if mankind wishes to obey Allah (swt) and worship Him, this can only be done in the manner He (swt) has prescribed for us. For Allah (swt) will bring us to account for all the actions we undertake. He (swt) says,

فَوَرَبُّكَ لَنَسْأَلَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ يَوْمَ كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ
"Therefore by your Lord, We will of a surety, call them to account for all that they used to do."⁹

Secondly, it is important to appreciate that the worship of Allah (swt) is not merely an individual sensation between oneself and Allah (swt); but rather is a continuous matter affecting all of one's life. For Allah (swt) has said,

قُلْ إِنِّي صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ
وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ
"Verily my prayer, my sarificies, my living and my dying are for Allah, the lord of the Al-Alameen. He has no partner. And

⁸ Al-Qur'an – Surah An-Nahl, 16:89

⁹ Al-Qur'an - Surah Al-Hijr, 15:92-93

of this I have been commanded and I am the first of the Muslims.”¹⁰

The above ayah describes the whole existence of a human being; that being from the beginning of life, encompassing numerous events and eventually ending in death. Allah (swt) has ordered the believers to surrender all of their life and their wealth and sacrifices to Allah; thus desiring the believers to act constantly in accordance with His command.

Allah did not solely reveal the Qur'an and then leave mankind to act upon it according to their own whims or desires. Rather, He (swt) sent with it the Messenger Muhammad (saw) to show us how to carry it, live by it and to implement it. Allah (swt) has informed us in numerous ayat of the obligation to follow the Messenger Muhammad (saw),

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

“Say: If you love Allah, follow me (Muhammad (saw)) and Allah will love you.”¹¹

and,

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

“Indeed in the Messenger of Allah you have the best example for him who looks to Allah and the last Day and remembers Allah much.”¹²

¹⁰ Al-Qur'an - Surah Al-Ana'am, 6:162-163

¹¹ Al-Qur'an - Surah Ale-Imraan, 3:31

This is because Allah (swt) has instilled in the words, the actions and the consent of the Prophet, *the Sunnah*, revelation from the Seven Heavens. He (swt) says,

وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ ۖ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ

*"Nor does he (Muhammad) say (aught) of (his own) desire. It is no less than inspiration sent down to him"*¹³

The Study of the Life of Muhammad (saw)

With such a reference from the Creator, it becomes incumbent upon the followers of Islam to read the life of the Messenger Muhammad (saw) to see how he enacted the commands of Allah (swt); how he (saw) lived by them, struggled with them and eventually implemented them. Books detailing this aspect and the life of Muhammad (saw) are known as books of *seerah*.

The seerah is commonly understood to be the biography of the Prophet (saw). Many famous writers of seerah such as Haykal and Ibn Hisham have attempted to compile the life of the Prophet (saw) in their works. People often refer to the seerah in order to understand the life of the Prophet Muhammad (saw) and to follow his example, as he (saw) is *Uswaa Hasanna*, the best example. When reading or studying the seerah, it is important to distinguish it from the Sunnah as the seerah is not a source of legislation in Islam because in its totality it has never been fully verified or classified. We therefore refer to the seerah to put the revelation into context i.e. the time, place and situation when the ayats were revealed.

¹² Al-Qur'an - Surah Al-Ahzaab, 33:21

¹³ Al-Qur'an - Surah An-Najm, 53:3-4

The Linguistic definition of Seerah

Seerah has many meanings in the Arabic language and this has caused some confusion among the people. For example, amongst its meanings are: sunnah, method, situation, circumstances, form and history. Thus it is important to come to a uniform Shar'iah definition to understand the topic comprehensively.

The Shar'iah Definition of Seerah

The following definition is agreed amongst the Usuli Scholars:

"The science of narration which involves the start of creation, the history of previous nations, the narration's of the Messengers and Prophets and the life of Rasool Allah (saw) from before revelation to his death (i.e. after revelation), by Islamic chains or divine evidences".

The seerah is classified into the following categories by the Scholars:

- (i) Bidu Al-Khalq - The beginning of creation
- (ii) Qassas Al-Anbiya - History and narrations of previous Prophets
- (iii) Hayat Muhammad - The life of Muhammad (saw)
- (iv) Tareekh Al-Khulafa - The history of the Khaleefs

The Scholars of Usul do not accept narrations from the Judeo-Christian sources and hence the definition includes: *"...by Islamic chains or divine evidences"*. Although all four components are called seerah the one usually studied by scholars and the one we are concerned with is Hayat Muhammad, the life of Muhammad (saw).

Islam was revealed upon the Prophet Muhammad (saw) in the Arabian Peninsula when he attained the age of forty years. The Islamic call was delivered upon a people living in a particular age at a particular time. To gain a full understanding of the circumstances behind the revelation and the situation in which the Arabs were living at the time, it is vital to have some background knowledge about the Arab people, their

geography, history and traditions. Startling similarities can be seen between the society of today and that of the Arab Jahiliyah. By appreciating the context that the Qur'an was revealed in we can gain some insight as to the purpose of many of the rulings of Islam and by studying how the Prophet Muhammad (saw) and his companions understood these ayat, and carried them to the people, we can comprehend the true purpose of the Qur'an ourselves, since Allah (swt) has ordered us to follow all that Muhammad (saw) brought with him;

وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ

الْعِقَابِ

*"And whatsoever the Messenger brings take. And whatsoever he forbids you abstain and keep your duty to Allah (swt)."*¹⁴

The same way in which the Qur'anic ayat were recited to the nations 1400 years ago by the Prophet (saw) and his companions (ra); these very ayat must also be recited and applied to the societies of today.

¹⁴ Al-Qur'an - Surah Al-Hashr, 59:7

Al-Jazirat Ul-Arabiyyah

The Geography

On the world map, Al-Jazirat Ul-Arabiyyah occupies a large region in South Western Asia; it spans an area equivalent to a quarter of the size of Europe, approximately a million square miles. The name Al-Jazirat Ul-Arabiyyah is Arabic for the Arabian Peninsula, so called for being an area united linguistically by the Arab tongue. Geographically, the name Jazirah (Peninsula) is attributed to the vast expanse of land which is surrounded by the three seas, the Red Sea (*Al-Bahr Ahmar*) in the West, the Arabian Gulf (*Al-Khalijal 'Arabi*) in the East, and the Indian Ocean (*Al-Muhitul Hind*) in the South. The word Al-Jazirah implies that Arabia is an island, although it is not an island as such. Muslim geographers have classified the Arabian Peninsula into five main areas:

Al Hijaz - extending from Al-Aqabah to Yemen was named after the range of mountains running along the Western coast separating the coastal belts of Tihama from Najd

Tihama - an area stretching from Hijaz to al-Najd

Yemen - south of Al-Hijaz, lying in the southwestern corner of Arabia

Al Najd - an area found in Yemen

Al Aruz - an area up to the border of Iraq

The Climate

The Arabian Peninsula is one of the hottest and driest regions of the world with almost the entire 'island' consisting of barren desert. The region is mainly surrounded by mountain ranges and its severe climate restricts the areas of possible population settlement. Due to the difficulties of living in such an atmosphere the Bedouin Arabs

became individualistic and were continually involved in tribal feuds and the search for areas where water was plentiful. The Bedouins were constantly moving from place to place, to live and survive and thus were named "*Arab un-ruhal*" or Arabs on the move.

They would reside over pastures of land for as long as they could graze their livestock and then move on. The harsh atmosphere of the arid deserts of Arabia made it unsuitable for cultivation, manufacturing or development. However, trade was a forte for these people with noted trade centres being located at Makkah and Yemen. The Arabian Peninsula was laden with caravan routes ranging from as far afield as the Persian Gulf to the shores of Syria and Palestine.

The desert life for the Arabs was hard and many dangers could befall them. The excursions from area to area in search of water, food and other sources of living, generated rivalry between the Bedouins. Those who discovered oases first would maintain control and dictate who were allowed to stay and for what price. This resulted in hostile relations between the Arab tribes because of the scarcity of resources and the necessity of water for living. Such was the case, until the establishment of Islam, up until that time the Arabs knew little but the language of power, might and control.

People and Society

Aside from speaking the same language and living in the same area, the Arabs shared the same Deen, namely Shirk¹⁵ (idolatry). The Arabs would isolate themselves from other cultures, as they wanted to maintain the Deen of their forefathers, keeping it pure and unadulterated.

¹⁵ *Shirk* – To associate partners with Allah (swt). As Abu Bakr (ra) said, "*As-Shirkis to make anything similar to Allah (swt) or to say He has children.*" [Bayhaqi]

Because of the nature and terrain of the Arabian Peninsula, Arabs had to adopt a nomadic lifestyle; this meant they had no taste for settled life. No kind of permanent residence was sought; rather continual movement in search of pasture was required. A tribe was thus always on the move, and never felt the need to adhere to any particular political order.

The society that existed was primitive in nature, there was no organized central rule; each tribe having its own code of conduct and honour. Loyalty to the tribe one was born into and fighting to secure its due rights was regarded as the main virtue of living. Tribal loyalties led to conflicts and disputes were commonplace amongst the Arabs. They thrived on raids, stealing and usurping the property of others. The pillage of caravans and cold-blooded murder for paltry gains was the mainstay for the Bedouin Arabs. In order to protect themselves from the constant raids of the Bedouin many people had to pay the Jizya, a form of tax.

As the population grew, people began to gather around areas that were rich in natural resources and towns and cities began to emerge. These new communities affected the basic lifestyle of the Arabs, who prior to this had been nomads. The Arabs became divided broadly into two communities as they grew in number, those of the city and the Bedouins of the desert.

Bedouins generally resided either on the outskirts of cities or in the heart of the desert. The cities were usually located on areas rich in resources, vital for life. The Bedouins had few livestock and possessions and in order for them to survive, they would raid the cities where the wealthy tradesmen lived. The Bedouins also raided the caravans that passed on the numerous trade routes between cities or the trade routes to other countries. As you can imagine, life for the Bedouins Arabs was extremely hard with day-to-day living being of primary concern. The

Bedouins however, did not perceive it as such, commenting in their poetry as having “*complete freedom*”. In contrast, the wealthier folk of the cities resided in the lap of luxury with slaves catering for their every demand.

Clothes

The dichotomy of the lives of the Bedouins with those of the city dwellers was particularly evident in the garments that they would adorn themselves with. The Bedouins wore *Al-Maheet*, a cloak-like shirt made from camel skin or woven with sheep’s wool. With this, they would often wear turbans that would protect them from exposure to the intense heat of the desert sun.

The city dwellers would often wear more ornate and prestigious attires. They also would wear cloaks and turbans but these were known as *Al-Muhanaqa* since they were made from specially dyed yellow wool. Both communities used to wear *Al-Nia’al*, a type of slipper originally used by the Persians.

Even during war, the importance of wearing garments that identified individuals was continued. Some people such as Hamza Ibn Mut used to wear large red ostrich feathers on their chests so that people could recognise them when they were fighting. Others wore specially crafted black turbans in order to stand out and be distinguished. However, this tradition was by no means universal and some would even cover their faces with *Al-Niqaab* so that they could not be recognised after the war.

Diet and Food

The staple food of the Arabs consisted mainly of grain, cornflower, dates and yoghurt; but their favourite food, for those who could afford it, was camel meat. Some Bedouins used to hunt for lizard, deer and even rabbit. However, since these were quite rare, they were saved for special occasions. Most of the desert Arabs lived off dates. For those

who could afford to feast, there were usually two main periods set aside for eating; a period at lunch, after the sun had passed its Meridian and late into the night in case guests visited.

Residences

The imbalance of power and wealth between tribes could be demonstrated by the range of different materials from which people would construct their houses. Land was often owned by noblemen, who could levy taxes on those who resided there, thus creating a form of Feudal System. For those who could not afford much, a *Kiba*, or a three-pillared structure with the wool of sheep draped over the top in a form of a roof sufficed as protection from the elements. Others who had more wealth built *Al-Sidaak*, or structures draped with cotton. Those who were wealthy built houses from either rocks, *Al-Atniqh* or from mud, *Al-Qulna*. However, the most common place of abode was *Al-Khaymah* or tent like structures.

The Religion of the Arabs

The geographic location and expanse of the Arabian Peninsula made it a melting pot of most, if not all, of the entire world's religions. However, prior to the advent of Islam, the most well-known and attributable religion of the Arabs was that of Paganism. The nature of Paganism is the worship of more than one deity.

Although this was widespread throughout the whole Peninsula it was not the initial established religion. It is well known that ever since Arab history began there had always been a single place of worship, that being the Ka'bah¹⁶.

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِي بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا وَهُدًى لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

“Verily, the first House (of worship) appointed for mankind was that at Bakkah (Makkah), full of blessing and a guidance for Al-‘Alamin (man and Jinn)”¹⁷

During the time of Nuh (as), the House was destroyed by the Great Flood and was eventually rebuilt by the Prophet Ibrahim (as) and his son Ismail (as) from its foundation on the direct orders of Allah (swt).

وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

“And (remember) when Ibrahim and Ismail were raising the foundations of the House (Ka’bah) (saying) ‘Our Lord, accept this service from us. Verily you are As-Sami and Al-Aleem”¹⁸

The seeds of idolatry and ultimately Paganism were planted during the time of Ibrahim (as) by the accursed ‘Amr Bin Luhayy Bin Amir. His tribe (the Banu Jurhum) had the responsibility for the general upkeep of the Ka’bah in Makkah, with ‘Amr having ultimate custody. On a trip to As-Sham (modern-day Syria), ‘Amr witnessed the indigenous population worshipping strange objects. As he had never seen such forms of worship, ‘Amr inquired from the locals as to the purpose of these creations. He was informed that these idols were their ‘gods’ and that they would give them advice and heal them of their ailments.

This intrigued ‘Amr Bin Luhayy so much so that he requested to take some of the idols back to his people. He was given *Hubal*, which was

¹⁶ Ka’bah – (lit. cube) by definition means a place of worship. Also known as Al-Baytal-Haram (the Holy House)

¹⁷Al-Qur’an - Surah Ale-Imran, 3:96

¹⁸Al-Qur’an - Surah Al-Baqarah 2:127

placed inside the Ka'bah along with *Isaaf* (placed in front of the Ka'bah) and *Na'ilah* (placed next to the well of Zamzam).¹⁹

Besides Arab paganism, there existed other religions in the Arabian Peninsula. Some of these included the *As-Sabi'ah* (Sabeans), *Ad-Dahriyyah* (atheists), *Al-Hanafiyyah*, *Al-Yahudiyyah* and *Al-Nasraniyyah*.

Sabi'ah

The Sabi'ah were few in number, concentrated mainly in Harran in Northern Mesopotamia (known today as Altinbasak in Southern Turkey). Their religion consisted of worshipping the sun, the moon, stars as well as other celestial beings. They used to elevate the Jinn and the Shaytan, placing them as intermediaries between themselves and Allah (swt), and indeed Allah (swt) is free from such things. Even though the Sabeans believed in and followed the scriptures of the Prophet Ibrahim (as), their worship involved mixing *Kufr*²⁰ with these teachings. Similarly today, we find those who are misguided trying to reconcile Kufr concepts such as Democracy and Secularism with that of Islam.

¹⁹ According to Imaam Ibnu Kilbi, idolatry started when the descendants of the Prophet Ismail (as) went to live in Makkah as it was regarded as a Holy and secure place. Over the course of time, hostile relations between tribes developed and eventually war broke out. Because of the fighting, people were displaced and tribes were expelled from the Holy city. Since all tribes held Makkah in high esteem due to the blessings of Allah (swt) over it, accordingly they felt that Allah (swt) would also bless anything found within the city. Those who were prevented from entering Makkah, took with them small rocks and stones from the city believing them to have the same ritual significance. These stones were placed in places of worship and were often kissed, touched and blessings were sought from them. Eventually, instead of praying to Allah (swt) alone, people began to take these newly created idols as objects of worship. Thus, from simple beginnings, idolatry evolved into a complex and widespread practise that engulfed the whole of Arab culture.

²⁰ *Kufr* – (lit. to cover up) In Shar'iah defined as to disbelieve in Allah (swt) and His Messenger (saw) and whatever Allah (swt) has revealed to his Messengers

Ad-Dahriyyah

The Dahriyyah (atheists) were also few in number and even though they claimed not to believe in a diety, they often indulged in superstitious practices and would worship idols from other faiths.

Al-Hanafiyyah

Al-Hanaaf²¹ were those who rejected all types of paganism and idolatry choosing to take the path of the Prophet Ibrahim (as) who believed in one God alone. They were well known amongst the Arabs with historians mentioning particular personalities such as Qiyss Bin Sa'idah and Sirma Bin Abi Assun. They were located throughout the Arabian Peninsula, with small communities residing in the cities of Makkah and Madinah.

Al-Yahudiyyah

The Yahudiyyah (Jews) were widespread amongst the Arabian Peninsula with large communities settled in Yemen and Yathrib. The Jews were not particularly involved in propagating their faith in the Arabian lands, since they were isolated as a result of the attitudes of the Arab Pagans towards those who believed in a single diety. The Jews also contrived to isolate themselves, as they wanted to maintain the integrity of their own religion, believing that integration with others would corrupt their faith.

Al-Nasraniyyah

²¹Al-Hanaaf have commanded much praise amongst the classical Islamic historians. Ibn Ishaq narrates that once the Quraysh were making Tawaaf around one of their idols on their day of Eid (celebration). From amongst the Hanaaf, al-Waraqah Ibn Awfal, Ubaidullah Ibn Jahish, Uthman Ibn Hawayrith and Zaid ibnu Amru gathered together in order to destroy the idol saying according to Ibn Hisham, *"These people have gone astray from the deen of Ibrahim (as). They worship idols. They worship rocks. They worship something that does hear nor help them. O people! Let us gather together and call them towards to deen of Ibrahim."*

The Nasraniyyah (the Christians) had their power base in the Roman Empire. Because of the Roman desire to expand its borders and engulf other countries, the Christian faith began to spread abroad. Christians could be found from as far afield as Egypt up to the Red Sea including the areas of Syria and Palestine. Despite this, the area known today as Saudi Arabia was relatively untouched by Christians. This was largely due to the contempt the Romans held for the Arabs believing them to lack infrastructure and resources. A small number of Jews and Christians could be found in Makkah, but these were largely through slavery and were neither allowed to speak nor practise their religion freely.

Allah (swt) mentions some of these communities in the Qur'an:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالصَّابِئُونَ وَالنَّصَارَى مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

*"Surely, those who believe (in the Tawheed of Allah) and those who are Jews and the Sabeans and the Christians – whosoever believed in Allah and the Last Day, and worked righteousness, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve."*²²

²² Al-Qur'an – Surah Al-Mai'dah, 5:69

The International Empires

The Roman Empire

The city of Rome in Italy was founded in 742BC and during the rule of Emperor Augustus, became an Empire. The Romans had conquered many provinces extending their rule over vast areas even as far afield as Sudan and Egypt (conquered in 30BC). Over time, (largely due to economic and political benefits) the Romans adopted Christianity as their predominant belief and as a consequence fought battles against the Persian fire worshippers (Zoroastrians). Despite the ferocity with which they fought, they were defeated by the Persians in 572CE and again in 591CE.

Christianity became the state religion of the Romans and from its base in Christian Egypt, reached the independent state of Abyssinia, and from thence unto the Red Sea. It continued to spread, engulfing Palestine and Syria once the tribe of Ghassan²³ was converted.

The Persian Empire

The area of land known as Persia had a tumultuous history with many different empires fighting over it. The Medes, the Sumerians and the Assyrians fought for control during 700BC. The Archamenian dynasty eventually prised control of the area from the Babylonians in 550BC, with the emperor Cyrus extending control to the lands of Syria, Palestine and into Asia. The rise of Alexander the Great in 333BC, led to the demise of this Empire, eventually becoming annexed as part of the

²³Banu Ghassan - a South Arabian tribe who migrated from Yemen to Syria between the 3rd and 4th Century AD. Many of whom became Christians under the Byzantine Emperor Justinian.

Grecian Empire. Under Nausherwan (531-579CE), the Persian army arrived in Yemen, uprooted the Abyssinians and expelled them after a rule of 72 years. Yemen remained under the control of the Persian Empire until the advent of Islam.

Foreign Policy

Roman foreign policy was to conquer the whole world. The Romans were colonists, eager to expand the borders of their state. In contrast, the Persian Empire used to struggle against bordering states in order to gain control of resources without actually occupying the lands. They were more interested in forging economic ties and managing internal policies rather than expanding the borders of their state. Persia maintained its strength and resistance to the continual expansion of the Roman Empire and thus prevented the spread of Christianity further east, beyond the Euphrates.

It is well documented that the Quraysh would travel to Bilaad as-Sham every summer to exchange goods with the Romans, trading camels and cattle in return for slaves, and in turn the Romans would travel to Makkah. As this form of business was beneficial for both parties, the Romans and the Quraysh took steps to ensure that trade routes between their two countries were secure for caravans and businessmen. A similar trade link was forged between the Quraysh and Persia in winter.

Quraysh and the International Empires

Since the Roman and Persian empires were continually in a state of war with one another, and both had trade links with the Quraysh, their disputes would often filter down into Makkah. Even though the Quraysh had allegiance to the Romans they were reluctant to take steps to impair trading relations with the Persians against the Roman wishes who had declared, *"If we come (and trade) we shall have security but if the Persians come (for trade), kill them."*

In addition the Arabian Peninsula was split into two halves by two factions, the Northern Arab States with its capital Makkah, and the Southern Arab States, with its capital in Yemen. Each state had loyalties with opposing Empires; the Quraysh had loyalty to the Romans whilst the loyalties of the Yemeni Arabs lay with the Persian Empire. The differing loyalties the Northern and the Southern States had to their respective empires resulted in fighting between the Arab States whenever the Romans fought the Persians, and similarly vice versa. Yet out of this tense atmosphere, one leader of the Quraysh arose, Banu Abdul Manaaf, who was head of the Northern Peninsula, and who forged international relationships based on peace. He established fruitful relationships with the Abyssinians, As-Shamis i.e. the Romans, Iraq and Yemen all based on the relationships of trade despite the fact that the Northern States continued to have a desire to conquer the Southern States.

Within this era there were other catalysts apart from border disputes and aggressive foreign policies that would instigate war. The spread of religion was also a medium that the two empires used as a means to destabilise each other's empire. Religion was used as a weapon in their armoury since it could change people behind enemy's lines making them more sympathetic towards their cause and useful in times of war. When the Romans adopted Christianity they exported this belief to their trade partners in Yemen.

When the Christians made inroads into Yemen they faced immediate conflict. The Persians, who were fire worshippers, re-affirmed the fact that the Christians were their enemies and declared war since the Romans were inclined towards that belief. The Persians, despite being enraged by this encroachment, were unwilling to wage a full-scale war over Yemen and so instead sent a Jew named Zou Nawas to deal with the matter. Zou Nawaz was sent as an unofficial ambassador whose sole intention was to instigate the Persian plan in Yemen, without the

consequences of being seen by the international community as their representative. Thus, if the Romans were to retaliate against him with war, they would have been considered the perpetrators rather than the Persians. In Yemen, Zou Nawas would call to the people, *"Either give up Christianity or I will kill you."* The Yemenis refused to respond to such call, and so Zou Nawas and the Jews with him rounded up all the Christians, built a trench around them and slaughtered them all. Allah (swt) mentions this incident in *Surah al-Buruj*²⁴ describing how up to 20,000 Christian believers were burnt to death. This incident highlights how the Jews of the past like the present modern day Israeli State used genocide as a means to subjugate and control the masses.

Despite the scale of this atrocity, a Christian man named Dos Zou Thalaban from Saba managed to flee from Yemen to seek support from the Romans after the massacre. He pleaded, *"You are the King of the Romans. We need your help because Zou Nawas has killed our people."* The Romans assessed the situation and realised that if they were to respond by taking military action then Persia too would be drawn into conflict.

Persia also had the added advantage of being located close to Yemen so that any military force dispatched could arrive promptly and in great numbers sufficient to deal with any Roman military congregation. Taking all matters into consideration, the Roman leader only declared moral condemnation over the massacres; but sought limited military aid from the nearby countries in his alliance. He replied to Dos Zou Thalaban, *"Your country is far from us and closer to the Persians. I cannot do more for you than to write to the king of Habash (Abbyssinia – a majority Christian state) and to condemn the Persians and if this achieves no results then I will take action."* The letter was despatched and in response the

²⁴ Al-Qur'an - Surah Al-Buruj, 85:1-11; Also see Saheeh Muslim Vol 4, Hadith number 7148

Najashi from Abyssinia said, *"By God! I can never accept anyone to be killed for his belief; let alone if it is because he is Christian."* With this the king sent Ariat and Abrahah who completely destroyed Zou Nawas and his army.

The retaliation by the Abyssinians infuriated the Southern states of Yemen because they found amongst the ranks of their army people from the Northern States. On these grounds the Southern states declared war against the Northern states and began to engage in an all out economic, political and military campaign.

After much conflict Abrahah eventually became victorious and wrestled leadership over the Southern States from the idolaters. The war had ravaged the Yemeni economy, and had left many people killed. After assessing the situation, Abrahah wanted to revitalise the area by focusing on trade and tourism. Having seen the success and importance that the Ka'bah had for the economy of the Northern states, Abrahah decided to build a church of similar splendour hoping to displace the Ka'bah as the centre of commerce. Despite spending vast amounts on the construction, the cathedral was a disappointment. Pilgrims were not shunning the Ka'bah to go to Yemen and this enraged Abrahah. He felt that the only way he could divert people to his cathedral would be by destroying the Ka'bah itself. In the year that Muhammad (saw) was born, Abrahah gathered together a large army consisting of many soldiers and elephants with himself as commander and began to march towards Makkah. However, when his army entered Makkah, his elephants froze, refusing to face the direction of the Ka'bah, let alone to destroy it. Allah (swt) then sent a flock of birds carrying stones from the Hell-fire to pelt the immobilized army to death; thus by the Help of Allah (swt) the Ka'bah was protected and Abrahah was forced to flee back to Yemen where he eventually died from his wounds.

Muhammad (saw)'s Impact on the Empires

From the outset, when the Messenger Muhammad (saw) received revelation from Allah (swt) he began to address the Qurayshi way of life by exposing and addressing the fallacies of the laws that they made with their own hands and they then followed. The first accusation levied against him (saw) from the Quraysh was that he was merely a pawn sent by the Southern States. However, after a short period it became abundantly clear that Muhammad (saw) was against all forms of disobedience to Allah (swt) be they from the South or the North. This confused both the Roman and the Persian Empires, as they believed that Muhammad (saw) was a puppet of the other since he would attack their respective ideologies. This left each nation irresolute over what action they should take to silence Muhammad (saw). However, because of his (saw) activities, the foreign links in terms of political and economic realations between the Quraysh and both the Roman and Persian superpowers began to turn sour.

The Envoys of Muhammad (saw)

One of the first things that Muhammad (saw) did when he established the Islamic State in Madinah was to spread the Deen of Allah (swt) by sending envoys to each and every State. He sent his messengers simultaneously, carrying sealed letters to Heraculis of the Romans, Chosroes of the Persians, the leader of the Copts; Al-Muqawidis, the King of Al-Hirah; Al-Harith al-Ghassani, the King of Yemen; Al-Harith Al-Himyari and to the Negus of Abyssinia; Al-Najashi inviting them all to Islam.

Of the Arab States only the king of Bahrain and the governor of Yemen embraced Islam, whilst the king of Oman rejected and replied rudely. When Muhammad's (saw) letter reached the Negus of Abyssinia he responded favourably and it is reported that he also embraced Islam at a later date. The Chosroes of Persia was so outraged by the letter that he tore it up when it was read to him. Imaam Zuhri narrated that Kisra

(one of the Kings of the Persians) sent a letter to the government of Yemen reporting that a man from the Quraysh said that he was a Prophet. Ibn Hisham reported that the Kisra said that he must be stopped and if he does not do so; then for his head to be cut off and brought to him. When Allah's (swt) Messenger (saw) heard of this he immediately made a Du'a and said, *"May Allah (swt) tear up his kingdom."* Despite having leniency towards Persia, the governor of Yemen ignored what the Chosroes had to say and embraced Islam. He remained as the Messenger's (saw) governor of Yemen although he was not actually King. As for Heraclius, the leader of the Roman Empire, he sent a letter to Abu Sufyan, one of the leaders of Quraysh saying that this man (i.e. Muhammad (saw)) is affecting our interests and as Ibn Kathir narrates, *'We would like you to deal with this matter and if need be, kill them all.'*

Muhammad (saw) declares War

As soon as the envoys dispatched to the kings returned, Muhammad (saw) declared Jihad upon the states outside his jurisdiction in the Arabian Peninsula. He collected intelligence on both the Roman and Persian Empires and initially decided to wage war upon the Romans who had a border adjacent to the Islamic State. He (saw) sent an army of between 3,000 and 4,000 men to challenge the belligerent might of the Romans in the battle of Mu'tah in Al-Shams (modern day Jordan). Since Muhammad (saw) had instigated this battle, the Romans believed that he (saw) was receiving support and funding from the Persians and thus prepared a huge army. Upon arrival the Muslims learnt that Heraclius had dispatched an army of 100,000 soldiers. The Muslims decided to hold camp at Mu'an for two days awaiting any message from Allah's Messenger (saw). 'Abdullah Ibn Ruwahah encouraged the Muslims saying, *"O men! By Allah what you dislike is that which you have come out for, martyrdom. We are not fighting the enemy with numbers or strength or multitude, but we are fighting them with this Deen with which*

Allah (swt) has honoured us. So come on! Both prospects are good; victory or martyrdom."

The Muslims moved forward for battle and they fought the Romans in Mu'tah. Heraclius wanted to destroy the army of Allah (swt) and the Messenger (saw) so he sent an extra 100,000 soldiers as reinforcement; his army was now 200,000 strong. The Muslims gallantly fought an army fifty times their own size resisting them on every front. The *Sword of Allah*, Khalid Ibn Al-Waleed (ra) drew up a shrewd plan to end the stalemate; ordering a section of his army to create uproar at the rear, which the enemy could hear, deceiving them, making them believe that reinforcements had just arrived. This plan succeeded and put fear in the hearts of the enemy and some of them began to retreat and flee for their lives. From this position he (ra) ordered the simultaneous movement and attacks by large sections of his army against the Romans. This caused even more confusion amongst the enemies of Allah (swt), causing large sections of their army to flee. Eventually, he orchestrated a tactical withdrawal from the battlefield taking his troops back to Madinah, having accomplished a historical feat of challenging an army that outnumbered them 50 to 1, with the Help of Allah (swt). Allah (swt) showered his mercy upon the Muslims and taught them that it was neither weaponry nor superior numbers that gives victory, but Allah (swt) Himself. Insha-Allah, in the same manner that the Roman superpower was humbled by the Muslims, so too will the American superpower (and their allies) be humiliated and humbled.

Following the battle, Allah (swt) subsequently revealed to his Messenger (saw),

إِنَّ اللَّهَ اشْتَرَى مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ بِأَنْ لَهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ
 اللَّهِ فَيَقْتُلُونَ وَيُقْتَلُونَ وَعَدًا عَلَيْهِ حَقًّا فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ وَالْقُرْآنِ وَمَنْ أَوْفَى
 بِعَهْدِهِ مِنَ اللَّهِ

*“Allah (swt) has purchased of the Believers their persons and
 their goods; for theirs (in return) is the Garden (of Paradise):
 they fight in His cause, and slay and are slain: a promise
 binding on Him in Truth, through the Torah, the Gospel, and
 the Qur’an: And who is more faithful to His covenant than
 Allah (swt)?”²⁵*

By fighting the Roman Empire Muhammad (saw) declared his intentions of battling and conquering the Superpowers of his time. It sent a message to all the countries and States, that Islam would not be confined to its borders in Arabia, rather it endeavoured to dominate the whole world as ordered to us by Allah (swt) in the Qur’an, regardless of the army or the superpower which stood in its path. This battle demonstrated to the world that the Muslims had belief in the Tawheed²⁶ of Allah (swt), belief that Allah (swt) is the Giver and the Taker of life and that nobody dies unless Allah (swt) has ordained it and with this belief the Muslims would fight Jihaad against any army even if the army far outnumbered them and even if that army had superior weaponry. This battle proved the Muslims would fight no matter what odds were stacked against them.

²⁵ Al-Qur’an - Surah At-Taubah, 9:111

²⁶ *Tawheed* – (lit. unification) the comprehension, belief and submission to Allah (swt), His Supremacy and His Names and Attributes exclusively in all sayings, actions and convictions. The classical Ulema classify Tawheed into two categories, *Tawheed Ul-Ruboobiyyah* – the unity of Lordship and *Tawheed Al-Uloohiyyah* – the unity of Worship. Today, many Ulema include Tawheed al-Asma was-Sifaat and Tawheed al-Haakimiyyah as separate categories.

By fighting the Romans in Mu'tah the Muslims instilled fear in the hearts of the enemy, paving the way for further advances to the battle of Tabuk, which the Messenger of Allah (swt) led himself and from which the Muslims went on to conquer and bring As-Sham under the Islamic State.

The Age of Ignorance

Prior to the advent of Muhammad (saw), the situation in the Arabian Peninsula was such that it later became known as “*The age of ignorance*” (Jahiliyyah²⁷). He (saw) was sent in this time, carrying the message of the Qur’an. The final Messenger, Muhammad (saw), addressed the Jahiliyyah, struggled against it and finally eradicated it through the establishment of the Islamic State.

It is therefore essential, in order to understand the message of the Qur’an, to comprehend the life of the Arabs²⁸, in particular, their history, culture and systems of life prior to the advent of Islam.

The Quraysh

In Makkah, a group of tribes settled and began living together under the leadership of the Quraysh. The name “*Quraysh*” was attributed to Fihir Ibn Malik Ibn Kinanah, a forefather of the Prophet Muhammad (saw), who is said to have been a prosperous tradesman and a descendant of Ismail (as).

Makkah was founded between the two hills called “*Jabl Abu Qubays*” and “*Jabl Ahmar*” opposite the valley of Quaqiq’an. The location was on important caravan routes across the Peninsula and thus because of this, as well as the sanctity of the Ka’bah, the descendants of Fihir, who

²⁷ *Jahiliyyah*, from *Jahil* (lit. ignorance) refers to the “time of ignorance” or period of Arab Paganism before the advent of Islam

²⁸ *Arab* refers to the Semetic people indigenous to the Arabian Peninsula. The name Arab is now applied to all people who speak Arabic as a mother tongue, including Muslims and Christians, but not Druzes and Arab speaking Jews

maintained and sanctified the Ka'bah, grew in prestige and honour. Fihhr Ibn Malik, aided by his children and his tribe, received pilgrims who had come to stay in Makkah for the pilgrimage (Hajj). The Hajj had been performed since the time of Prophet Ibrahim (as). When the pilgrims entered Makkah they would require basic essentials such as water, food and shelter. At the time, Quraysh controlled the Zamzam and most of the main resources in the area. Therefore, whenever a new tribe entered Makkah, they were obliged to pay Quraysh a tax to receive the necessary hospitality for their stay. This tax formed the basic income for the Quraysh. Tribes that wished to permanently settle in Makkah would have to forge an alliance with Quraysh who would then delegate some responsibility to them.

As more and more tribes joined the alliance with the Quraysh, the population of Makkah increased and eventually the alliance was transformed into a system of government. This government developed rules of law that evolved into ruling, social, political and judicial systems to which the people abided and adhered.

The Ruling System

This early government co-ordinated the construction of a Parliament where representatives from each tribe would gather in order to deal with political disputes. These disputes were often intense and sometimes developed into bloody confrontations between tribes of the alliance. On one occasion, the dispute was so heated that it threatened the very fabric of the alliance. A man called Qusayy Ibn Kilab through his diplomacy, managed to avert this crisis and re-united the tribes back under the alliance. Qusayy Ibn Kilab was a fifth generation descendant of the founder of the Quraysh, Fihhr Ibn Malik. The numerous tribes attested to Qusayy's influence, wisdom and unique ability and therefore unanimously elected him to be both the bearer of keys to the Ka'bah and their leader.

Qusayy Ibn Kilab divided the newly founded "*State of the Quraysh*" into five departments: Dar An -Nadwah (Parliament), Dar Al-Liwaa (War Department), Dar Al-Hujaabah (Department of Religious Affairs), Dar al-Siqayah Ul-Hijaz (Water distribution Department) and finally, Dar al-Rifaadah (Health and Education Department). Even though Qusayy Ibn Kilab was the Head of State and ultimate authority lay in his hands, in an attempt to prevent feuds, he structured the system such that each head of tribe was delegated a different area of responsibility.

The Parliament

Dar An-Nadwah was the parliament of the Quraysh. It was the location where the people of authority would discuss the internal and external affairs of Makkah. Here, the men from the Ashraaf (nobles) of each tribe from the alliance along with the influential people of Makkah would meet and discuss the day-to-day affairs.

The Ashraaf were elected to act as representatives for their respective tribes. In order for candidates to be eligible they had to fulfil certain criteria before they could be present in An-Nadwah. Some of these conditions included being male, sane, at least 40 years old and belonging to one of the tribes who had given allegiance to Qusayy Ibn Kilab.

In An-Nadwah, consultations regarding the different aspects of society were discussed and votes were taken on issues such as at what age should daughters be buried alive, whether homosexuality should be legal or not, how to deal with threats to the economy or religion. When the majority present agreed on particular issues, these were then accepted as part of law in a similar fashion to those countries today who adopt 'Democracy'.

It was this parliament that ultimately decided on how to deal with the Prophet (saw) and his companions. An example of this was when

Muhammad (saw) famously stood on Mount Safa and invited all the tribes to Islam. Abu Lahab and the leaders of the Quraysh became so enraged by what they heard that they met together in An-Nadwah to agree upon a unanimous stance and policy against Muhammad (saw) and what exactly should be said to the public. After much debate and deliberation between the leaders, they finally agreed and unequivocally stated that Muhammad (saw) was a magician who was able to use Sihr ul-Bayaan, the magic of words to captivate the hearts of Arabs when he recited the Qur'an. This day that the Quraysh deliberated in Dar An-Nadwah became known as *'The Day of Parliament to discuss the affair of the Fundamentalists.'*

In Dar An-Nadwah, the Quraysh would discuss different affairs on different days of the week. On Monday the leaders of Makkah would debate religious issues facing the people, such as which idols would be worshipped and paraded outside the Ka'bah, since they had 360 idols in the building itself and each one belonged to different tribes. They organised which idols would be lent or shared between the tribes to worship for a duration of time. These idols played a major role in their economic system, as businessmen would consult the idols in their transactions and pay a tax for this service to the Quraysh.

On Tuesdays, the Quraysh would meet and debate economic issues that the Makkans encountered in the Marketplace. It is reported by Imaam Absheie that on the 'Day of Economy' (Tuesday) the Quraysh gathered together in Dar An-Nadwah to discuss the issues raised by Muhammad (saw) when he recited the verses of Al-Mutaffifin, as will be described later on.

On Thursdays, the Leaders of Quraysh would gather together and attempt to solve any disputes, which arose between the nobles (al-Ashraaf) and the custodians of the Ka'bah (al-Sadanah).

On Fridays, the Leaders of the Quraysh would meet to solve any disputes within the general public. On one particular Friday, Quraysh met to discuss an idol that a Muslim had destroyed. The notion of destroying idols had huge implications to Quraysh since not only did they represent their belief and all that they stood for; but the idols were also one of their means of getting revenue as they would claim taxes for their worship and consultation.

Even though consultation existed in An-Nadwah, disputes often arose between tribes regarding issues of leadership. On one occasion this led to the tribes fighting each other over who should have leadership of the Ka'bah during the sacred month of Dhul Hijjah. As the war violated one of the sacred months in which it was customary for no fighting to take place, it was named, "*Harb Ul -Fujjar*" or "*War of the Gangsters*". Since war had taken place during the Hajj season, many pilgrims decided to shun the Hajj as they were fearful for their lives. The ramifications in terms of loss of revenue as a result of this war were so great that all the tribes were forced to forge an alliance called "*Hilful Fudul*". In this cease-fire agreement, the tribes agreed not to kill any Hajjis, nor to oppress or prevent people from entering Makkah. They also promised to provide security, shelter and water to any travelers into the area. Those who presided in An-Nadwah were considered the Ashraaf (noblesmen). Ibn Hisham narrates that when Muhammad (saw) reached the age of forty he was offered a seat in An-Nadwah due to the position, wisdom and esteem the people held him in. However, he (saw) rejected this, and the system remained as it was until the Prophet Muhammad (saw) returned to Makkah as the Leader of the Islamic State annexing it.

The War Department

The department of War, or Dar Al-Liwaa was responsible for both the Internal and External war policies of the Qurayshi State. Any individual or tribe who was deemed a potential threat to the security of the

Alliance would be investigated, interrogated, and if need be, extradited. The War Department was also responsible for the preparation and training of groups of raiders who were then sent out to raid neighbouring tribes and caravans that would pass nearby. Raiding not only ensured the capturing of goods and property of others but also reinforced the Alliance's influence over Makkah and its surrounding areas.

For the Makkan society this was a substantial means of earning as it allowed the capture of goods and slaves who were then sold on or traded with. Much as war was a tool of economic benefit for the Makkans, and not one by which the Justice and Fairness of the Creator was established, we find the same situation today, where societies that have greater military might, engineer wars so that they can improve sales and profits in their respective industries.

The Department of Religious Affairs

Dar Al-Hujaabah, the department of Religious Affairs, was responsible for managing the affairs of the Ka'bah. This included maintaining its cleanliness and its day-to-day upkeep. Since Al-Hujaabah had such an undertaking, it was only befitting that they too would possess the keys to the main gate of the Ka'bah. Thus, permission to enter the grounds could only be gained by asking the Amir of Al-Hujaabah, Usman Ibn Talhah Bin Abdul Uzzah.

The Ka'bah had within it a multitude of idols from various tribes. Al-Hujaabah was responsible for organising the number of idols that would be placed in the Ka'bah and when people could come and visit. They were also responsible for the collection of any money and sacrifices that were offered to the 'gods'. The Quraysh were quick to reap the economic benefits that idol worship had brought them. Thus in order to attain maximum benefit, religion was adopted by the state and worship regulated. The worship of Allah (swt) without partners had

thus been transformed from its original pure form, into a product that brought great wealth and notoriety to the Qurasyh and those in alliance with them.

The Department of Resources

Dar Al-Siqayyah ul-Hijaz, or the department of resources, was responsible for the management and distribution of water and energy to the people. However, these services were only provided with a fee. The department of resources also had a specific role during the time of Hajj; this was to distribute Zamzam water and such foods as dates and raisins to all the Hajjis. The authority of this department was given to Abbas Ibn Muttalib and his sons.

The Department of Health & Education

The fifth department was the Dar Al-Rafaadah, or Ministry of Health and Education. This department dealt with helping to educate illiterate tribes around Makkah and was also responsible for curing any medical ailments that would arise.

As we can see, the Quraysh had a form of central government. It also had an internal policy to deal with the inhabitants of Makkah as well as an external (foreign) policy, to raid and gain resources from other tribes.

The Economic System

We have seen how the Department of War used raids as a means of income, and also how the Ka'bah was the focal point of the economic system of the Quraysh. However, these were not the sole focuses for income.

Taxation

The Quraysh employed a hierarchical system of taxation in a similar vein to the Feudal system Europe had during the Dark Ages. A person

of influence could purchase areas of land from the state; those that lived on these lands would then be required to pay a tax to their new landlords. Although the tax payable was limited to only once a year, the value could be fixed as the landlord pleased.

Those presiding in Dar An-Nadwah, would compete against one another in the purchasing of land. This led to a near monopoly in who owned the land, and also hardship on those who resided there since taxes were initiated to such an extent that anyone who lived, worked or even walked over the land would be liable to some form of duty. Taxation was not limited to day-to-day living; even the worshipping of idols was taxed. Those that visited the Ka'bah to worship a particular idol would be liable to a tax levied at the discretion of the idol's owner.

Trade

Historically, the lands of Egypt and Abyssinia were economically more prosperous than that of the Quraysh since they had numerous trade routes to countries all over the world. However, none of these countries enjoyed the presence of a centre of gathering such as that of the Ka'bah; a place where travellers would come from all corners of Al-Jazirah Ul-Arabiyyah in order to worship. Traders recognised the economic potential of the Sacred City and would journey to gain a share of the spoils. As a result of this, from the 6th century C.E. onwards, Makkah emerged as the centre point of trading between Yemen, Al-Sham and Abyssinia.

After the alliance of Hilf ul-Fudul, trading flourished in Makkah traders and travellers were given protection and security against any attempts by tribes to raid them. Over time the Quraysh reaped the rewards as they developed two key trading routes, one between Makkah and Yemen in the winter, and one to As-Sham during the summer.

Allah (swt) mentions these trading routes in the Qur'an,

لِإِيلَافِ قُرَيْشٍ يَّ إِلَافِهِمْ رِحْلَةَ الشِّتَاءِ وَالصَّيْفِ يَّ فَلْيَعْبُدُوا رَبَّ هَذَا الْبَيْتِ
الَّذِي أَطْعَمَهُمْ مِنْ جُوعٍ وَآمَنَهُمْ مِنْ خَوْفٍ

*"For the taming of the Quraysh, Their caravans to set forth
safe in winter and in summer. So let them worship the Lord of
this House, Who has fed them against hunger, and has made
them safe from fear."*²⁹

Consequently, Makkah not only established trading links with the areas of As-Sham and Yemen, but more importantly created political links with the Roman Empire situated in the north (As-Sham) and the Persian Empire in the south (Yemen).

Marketplaces

There were many famous areas that existed in and around Makkah where people would come to gather and exchange goods and ideas. Events would take place on specific days throughout the year and often hoards of people would gather at these areas, travelling great distances to participate.

Some of the marketplaces were especially famous and were restricted only to noblesmen. The Souk of Ukaaz was an example of this, to which Muhammad (saw) was invited to attend. It was a place located between Naklah and Al-Ta'if where the best poets used to gather. The Arabs were extremely talented in terms of their linguistic prowess and were able to eloquently convey their ideas and emotions through their works of poetry. Their mastery of the Arabic tongue was such that they would talk in poetry on issues ranging from the most benign to romantic ballads about love and affection. Poets would often engage in linguistic

²⁹Al-Qur'an - Surah Quraysh, 106:1-4

contests where they would compete to recite the best poetry. These competitions were usually held during the four sacred months and could last for up to forty days. Ukaaz Ul-Majaaz (located in an area close to Arafat) used to hold similar markets for eight days. Here they would debate all types of poetry and literature and would reminisce about the days of old. Souk Ul-Majinah was a ten-day event held regularly at Majinah where people would sell foods, slaves and provide light entertainment and recite poetry. Souk Ul-Hubaashah, near to Yemen used to open yearly in the month of Rajab. Domat Al-Jannah used to start on Rabi Ul-Awwal while Souk Ur-Hajar, close to Bahrain used to be open during the end of Rabi Al-Thani.

As the desert land was barely cultivatable, the Arabs would purchase their foods, garments, diamonds, and weapons from these market places. All of these famous markets represented centres of business bustling with trade, with people buying and selling different commodities that were not found in the Arab peninsula. The Ashraaf (noble people) used to levy a 10% fee on goods purchased or sold during the markets and responsibility for this was delegated to Bani Abdullah Ul-Darim. Since these markets also provided an essential percentage of Quraysh's yearly income and the long distances many market traders had to travel, the Quraysh organised a service known as *Adillah* which would help caravans on trade routes giving them assistance in terms of directions and protection.

When Muhammad (saw) received revelation, he would frequently visit these gatherings and challenge those that claimed to be intellectuals and poets to produce a Chapter similar to that of the Qur'an. Allah (swt) informs us of this challenge;

وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا
شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ لَا فَاِن لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا فَاتَّقُوا
النَّارَ الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ

“And if you are in doubt concerning that which We have sent down (Al-Qur’an) to Our slave (Muhammad (saw)) then produce a chapter of the like thereof and call your witnesses besides Allah if you are truthful. But if you do not and (surely) you will not! Then fear the Fire whose fuel is men and stone prepared for the disbelievers.”³⁰

Slavery in Makkah

Even though the numerous trade routes brought abundant wealth, Quraysh felt the need to develop other sources of income in the event that trading became hampered due to raids by neighbouring tribes or by changes in the international situation. Thus as a result of this worry, they created a slave market in Makkah, similar to those found in Yemen and As-Sham. To achieve this, Quraysh began to raid the villages and tribes that were at war with them, capturing and enslaving their inhabitants and bringing them back to Makkah. The slaves who had the necessary features and characteristics allowing them to excel in the tasks they were to perform were selected, separated and bred. When the children of these slaves matured, they were taken and advertised in the slave markets of Makkah where families and noblemen would purchase them.

Since the Quraysh only encountered and fought with tribes that were principally of Arab origin, the gene pool of the slaves they captured was restricted to this as well. Thus in order to increase variability in colour, stature and physic, the Quraysh began to use their trade links

³⁰ Al-Qur’an - Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:23-24

with the Roman and Persian Empires to exchange Arab slaves for those of different races and nationalities. Slave women who would bear twins or triplets were highly sought after and could command very high prices and increased standards of living. Slavery thus became a form of trade and was soon to become widespread throughout the Arab peninsula following the success founded in Makkah.

Judicial System

Day-to-day disputes between the Arabs could often be extremely heated and angry affairs. In some instances, relatively simple disputes led to numerous years of war and fighting between neighbouring tribes. In order to settle their disputes more amicably, Arabs would often go to representatives of the Qurayshi Judiciary. There were three different departments the common people could go to;

Al-Qohaani

These were people who would speak about events that had not yet come to pass. They were contacted when people would desire to learn what the future held for them in terms of marriage, business and offspring. It was well known that the Qohaani had the ability to contact the Jinn, and would obtain the relevant information through this means.

Prior to the time of revelation, the Jinn were able to travel in space and eavesdrop on the Angels discussing matters of destiny of individuals before they were born. However, it has reported in the hadith³¹ that, when Allah (swt) sent down to the Messenger Muhammad (saw) the first verses of "*Iqra*," He (swt) employed specific Angels in the Heavens to prevent the Jinn from gaining access to what they

³¹ Hadith in Arabic has the general meaning of speech. In Shar'iah, it refers to the prophetic traditions which comprise all of the Prophet's speech, deeds or tacit decisions.

discussed. Therefore, from the point of Wahi onwards, the Jinn were prevented from bringing news of future events to the fortune-tellers.

Ashaab ul-Raaie wal Hukoumah

The People of Opinion and Judgement were largely chosen from a select tribe known as Bani Sihl; which was of the Quraysh. Their job was to solve the lesser disputes between the people; before they were taken to Al-Aa'raaf. Some of the famous personalities amongst them were Abdul Manaaf, Aksam bin Saifi, Harith bin Yazid, Qusayy bin Kilab and Amir bin Zarb al Udwani. Ibn Kathir in *As-Seerah Al-Halabiyyah* mentions the life of Amir Ibn Zarb al Udwani describing him as a person of Opinion (i.e someone well versed). In *Bulugh al Irab*, by Imaam Alausi the names of the women who were involved in the judiciary such as Suqhayla, the daughter of Amir Ibn Zharb are mentioned³².

Al-A'rraaf

The A'rraaf were consulted because of their shrewdness and ability to outway differing evidences and testimonies. In the Qurashi society they held a similar role to the judge and jury of today. In order to settle disputes, they would convene a meeting between the parties involved in An-Nadwah and would assess the arguments put forward, evidences available as well as the eloquence of the representatives before using their own intuition to pass judgement upon the case.

After witnessing both accounts, they would break for recess gathering together amongst themselves to discuss their opinions and verdicts on the case. If they had come to an agreement, the unanimous judgement would then be passed. However, if they were unable to ascertain a clear verdict then the aid of the idols would be requested through al-Kur'a, the playing of lots.

³² According to Jumu'ah bin Tuharbis, Suqhayla was Amir Ibn Zharb's slave

An example of how the A'rraaf handled disputes was when al-Aas Ibn Wa'il and a man from the tribe of Zubhrah had a disagreement. Al-Aas had bought some goods from this man, but delayed the payment. The man from Zubhrah became frustrated and lost his patience. He stood up whilst in the Ka'bah and shouted to all present, *"This man [al-Aas] refuses to pay me."* To prevent the matter escalating, the A'rraaf took him to An-Nadwah for arbitration and to investigate his accusations.

Abdullah bin Jud'am, a businessman and a Noblesman, was selected from amongst the Quraysh to be *'the Judge of Justice'* in this case; and was responsible for returning the wealth and property back to the oppressed party in accordance with Hilf ul-Fudul (a treaty set up by the Arabs to protect traders in Makkah). He said to al-Aas, *"Did you buy these goods from him?"* He replied, *"Yes."* Abdullah bin Jud'am responded, *"Then why did you delay and not pay him?"* Al-Aas said, *"I want to pay him."* Abdullah bin Jud'am said, *"When do you want to pay him?"* He replied, *"I will pay him whenever I can."* Upon hearing this Abdullah bin Jud'am passed judgment and declared, *"Seize his goods and return the money back."*

The Quraysh before Islam even turned to Muhammad (saw) to settle their disagreement as to who would place the Black Stone in the Ka'bah during its renovation. This was because of the position in which the people held him (saw) in society since they regarded him as *'the Truthful'* and *'the Trustworthy'* and also due to his noble Qurayshi lineage.

Punishment System

The legal structure of the Qurayshi System was fairly primitive with makeshift judges and courts. The Ashraaf held most of the judicial positions due to their wealth and influence. As a result, the common person was usually unfairly tried and the punishments imposed upon them were inconsistent; largely depending on how the judge felt on the

day and whether they had a lenient or harsh reputation. To bolster the legitimacy of any opinion passed, as well as to try criminals who contravened laws issued by An-Nadwah, Quraysh would also resort to their idols to seek suitable punishments. Although this sounds fanciful, the Quraysh would decide on a punishment and then choose an idol for judgement. They would then record the words 'Good' and 'Bad' on two sheets of paper and place them besides the idol. Whichever sheet surfaced after a period of time, would then be the verdict as judged by the idol.

Thus in this society, the people of wealth were largely immune to any punishment; with their wealth representing power and influence. If a Noblesman were to kill a person who was of a lower class, there would never be any retribution. On the other hand, if a common person (*Al-raab*) or a slave (*Al -A'beed*) were to kill a Noblesman (*Al-Ashraaf*) then if tried and found guilty, the punishment passed would be death. Essentially there were two laws implemented in Makkah, one for the wealthy nobles and another for the rest of the people.

The Ritual System

Most of the people of the Quraysh were pagans; people who used to worship and offer sacrifices to idols. They believed their idols to be 'gods' and would take them as partners besides Allah (swt). Allah (swt) comments on this absurdity;

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ شُرَكَاءَكُمُ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَرُونِي مَاذَا خَلَقُوا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ
أَمْ لَهُمْ شِرْكٌ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ أَمْ آتَيْنَاهُمْ كِتَابًا فَهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِنْهُ بَلْ إِنْ يَعْذُ
الظَّالِمُونَ بَعْضُهُمْ بَعْضًا إِلَّا غُرُورًا

"Say: 'Have ye seen (these) 'Partners' of yours whom ye call upon besides God? Show Me what it is they have created in the (wide) earth. Or have they a share in the heavens? Or have

*We givethem a Book from which they (can derive) clear
(evidence)? Nay, the wrong-doers promise each other nothing
but delusions.”³³*

It is important for us at this juncture to examine the relationship the Quraysh had with these idols since Allah (swt) has said;

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ
فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا

*“God forgiveth not (The sin of) joining other gods with Him;
but He forgiveth whom He pleaseth other sins than this: one
who joins other gods with God, Hath strayed far, far away
(from the right).”³⁴*

The Arab Idols

How did the Quraysh view their idols? What could they do for them? What powers did they believe the idols to have? Answering these questions could perhaps enlighten us as to why Allah (swt) forgives all sins except that of Shirk and may also reveal the hidden idols that the people in this day and age have taken besides Allah (swt).

The people of Quraysh claimed to believe in Allah (swt); but instead of worshipping Allah (swt) alone, they ascribed to Him (swt) ‘daughters’³⁵ who they used to believe were the very idols they possessed. Believing the idols to be the ‘daughters of Allah (swt)’ they were venerated to so great an extent that they were placed inside the Ka’bah.

Hubal

³³ Al-Qur’an - Surah Al-Faatir, 35:40

³⁴ Al-Qur’an - Surah An-Nisaa 4:116

³⁵ And Allah (swt) is free from their lies; *“And they assign daughters for God! Glory be to Him! - and for themselves (sons) they desire!” [EMQ 16:57]*

Amongst the multiplicity of idols (it is said up to 360 existed) was the most important idol, Hubal. Hubal was made from cornelian rock and was fashioned in the shape of man lacking a right hand. It was believed that Hubal acted as the protector and guardian over the other idols in the Ka'bah. When the tribe of Quraysh acquired custody of the Ka'bah, they constructed a hand from gold and offered it to Hubal as a gift, seeking his pleasure.

It was an Arab tradition that whenever they wanted to perform a transaction or to make a contract they would first consult Hubal, the Idol of Destiny. As Hubal was an idol, and thus was unable to speak, they would approach Khuzaymah, the owner of Hubal, to intercede on their behalf. Khuzaymah would place seven cups on a table with the words "Good" and "Bad" written down, hidden underneath the cups. The questioner would then pay the owner a fee and choose a cup; revealing an answer either "Good" or "Bad". The decision would then be acted upon in the belief that Hubal had answered the question directly himself. Hubal was also often consulted on matters of burying the newborn baby girls; as to whether or not they should be killed.

Al-Manaat

The second most important idol in the eyes of the Arabs was Al- anaat, also known as '*Lillah Ul-Qadr*', the idol of Judiciary. This idol was a triangular shaped rock found at Qudayd on the Red Sea, between Makkah and Madinah. It played a different role to Hubal in that Hubal was consulted by the Awaam (general public) on matters related to fate and destiny, whilst Manaata, could only be consulted by the judges regarding judicial matters.

Manaata and Hubal were held in such an esteem by the people that some would even name their sons '*Abdul Hubal*', the servant of Hubal or '*Abdul Manaata*', the servant of Manaata. Hubal was well known and worshiped throughout the whole of the Arabian Peninsula, whereas

Manaat was especially revered amongst the tribes of Al-Aws and Al-Khazraj in Madinah.

When Muhammad (saw) returned to conquer Makkah on the 8th year following Hijrah, Ali (ra) was ordered specifically to destroy Al-Manaat. Muhammad (saw) himself cut open Hubal in the Ka'bah with his sword and the idol from then on was used as a doormat.

Al-Laat and Al-Uzzah

Other famous idols that were sacred to the Arabs, included Al-Laat and Al-Uzzah (the female goddesses of Decision). Al-Laat was a square rock located in a temple at Ta'if. Arabs from Hijaaz and Southern Arabia would make pilgrimage to worship the idol where they used to kiss and touch it, believing they would attain *barakah* (or blessings from Allah (swt)). Al-Uzzah, on the other hand, was a tree located in a valley to the east of Makkah known as Nakhlah. Banu Surfa Bin Murrah, the Quraysh and the tribes of Gunayh and Baahilah used to hold Al-Uzzah in high esteem. They would pay performing women to dance in the nude around the shrine at Nakhlah; where everyone would then gather and watch. Quraysh also used to make Tawaaf naked around these idols chanting, *"By Al-Lat, by Al-Uzzah, by Al-Manaat, the highest, we seek intercession through you to the Almighty."*

Allah (swt) addresses these idols in the Qur'an:

أَفَرَأَيْتُمُ اللَّاتَ وَالْعُزَّىٰ ۚ وَمَنَاةَ الثَّالِثَةَ الْأُخْرَىٰ ۚ أَلَكُمُ الذَّكَرُ وَلَهُ الْأُنثَىٰ ۚ
تِلْكَ إِذَا قِسْمَةٌ ضِيزَىٰ ۚ إِنْ هِيَ إِلَّا أَسْمَاءٌ سَمَّيْتُمُوهَا أَنْتُمْ وَآبَاؤُكُمْ مَا أَنْزَلَ
اللَّهُ بِهَا مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ ۚ إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَمَا تَهْوَى الْأَنْفُسُ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ مِنْ
رَبِّهِمُ الْهُدَىٰ

"Have ye seen Lat and Uzzah. And another, the third, Manaat? What! For you the male sex, and for Him, the female? Behold, such would be indeed a division most unfair! These are nothing but names which ye have devised, ye and your fathers, for which God has sent down no authority (whatsoever). They follow nothing but conjecture and what their own souls desire! Even though there has already come to them Guidance from their Lord!"³⁶

Many of the Orientalists quote from fabricated sources that Muhammad (saw) would say, *"Indeed Al-lat, the Uzzah and the Manaat are the highest idols and we must use them for intercession to reach Allah and we must therefore worship them"* and some were even audacious enough to claim that he (saw) made Sujood to the idols with the Mushriks and the Muslims. Such claims, although being based on fabricated sources making them spurious, can also be clearly refuted by the actions of Muhammad (saw) when he entered Makkah. He (saw) sent Khalid bin Walid to chop down and destroy Al-Uzzah. When Khalid bin Walid arrived at the site, he found a naked woman with dishevelled hair prostrating to the idol and so he slew her, saying, *"Al-Uzzah! Rejection is for you, not worship."* For Al-Laah, Muhammad (saw) sent Abu Sufyan Bin Harb and Al-Mughirah Ibn Shu'ba to destroy it.

Although Al-Laah, Al-Uzzah and Al-Hubal were amongst the most famous idols worshipped in the Arabian Peninsula, each tribe would have a specific idol that they were famous in worshipping. Amongst these idols included; *Al-Nasr* (shaped like a vulture) and worshipped by Al-Himrah, *Yauq* (shaped like a horse) who was worshipped by al-Hiyawann, *Suwa'* (shaped as a women) and worshipped by Huzayl, Kanana and Mizyana. *Yaguth* (shaped like a lion) was worshipped by the tribes of Muzhaji and Hawazaiyn and Al-Wadd, which was shaped like a man. Each of these idols had sanctuaries around which worship

³⁶ Al-Qur'an - Surah An-Najm, 53:19-23

would be performed. Sacrifices of animals (and often even human beings) were made on altars and the drained blood would then be offered to the idols as gifts.

These idols, although not worshipped as widely as Hubal, Mannat and Uzzah, had been worshipped for many generations since the time of Noah (as) and are specifically named in the Qur'an by Allah (swt):

قَالَ نُوحٌ رَبِّ إِنَّهُمْ عَصَوْنِي وَاتَّبَعُوا مَنْ لَمْ يَزِدْهُ مَالُهُ وَوَلَدُهُ إِلَّا خَسَارًا
-وَمَكَرُوا مَكْرًا كُبَّارًا ۖ وَقَالُوا لَا تَنْزِلُنَّ آلِهَتَكُمْ وَلَا تَذَرُنَّ وَدًّا وَلَا سُوَاعًا وَلَا
يَعُوثَ وَيَعُوقَ وَنَسْرًا ۖ وَقَدْ أَضَلُّوا كَثِيرًا وَلَا تَزِدِ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا ضَلَالًا ۖ مِمَّا
خَطِئْتَهُمْ أُعْرِقُوا فَأُدْخِلُوا نَارًا فَلَمْ يَجِدُوا لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَنْصَارًا

*"Noah said: 'O my Lord! They have disobeyed me but they follow (men) whose wealth and children give them no Increase but only Loss. And they have devised a tremendous Plot. And they have said (to each other) abandon not your gods; abandon neither Wadd nor Suwa neither Yaguth nor Yauq nor Nasr. They have already misled many; and grant Thou no increase to the wrongdoers but in straying (from their mark). Because of their sins they were drowned (in the flood) and were made to enter the Fire (of Punishment): and they found in lieu of Allah none to help them.'"*³⁷

These idols were specifically mentioned in the Qur'an to make the Messenger Muhammad (saw) and his companions (ra) aware of what the Kuffar worshipped and from whence this had originated. By linking the worshipping of idols to the destruction by the Great Flood of Noah (as), Allah (swt) was highlighting the failure which is the result of committing Shirk. Thus, when the Muslims would give da'wah, both the

³⁷ Al-Qur'an - Surah Nuh, 71:21-26

evils of their time as well as the evils of the past generations would be addressed.

Places of Worship

In addition to worshipping idols, the Arab Mushriks would designate areas within the Arabian Peninsula where they would gather to perform ritual activities. Some of these Ka'baat³⁸ included Ka'bah ul-Ta'if and Ka'bat ul-Zil Halaqah in Yemen. The Arabs often visited these Ka'baat to perform *tawaaf* (circumambulation around the site), wore *ihram* and performed hajj in a similar way as the Hanafiyyah did before them. However, despite these other places of worship, the Ka'bah in Al-Makkah Al-Mukarramah was the most famous and revered amongst the Arabs.

For the Ka'bah of Makkah, the Arabs set aside four sacred months to perform hajj: Dhul-Hijjah, Dhul-Qada'h, Rajab, and Muharrum. They would proclaim whilst performing Tawaaf, *"Here I am, O Lord! You have no partners except one partner! You are the One that possesses him and all that he owns."*

Arab Superstitions

The Arabs of the Quraysh were highly superstitious people. Amongst them were numerous fortune-tellers, knot-blowers and sorcerers, known collectively as al-Qoha'an. They claimed to have knowledge of the *ghaib* (unseen) as well as other mysterious powers. Examples of these people included Sutayy Az-Zahibie and Shukat Ibn Mus Al-Anmalie who both claimed to be Prophets and were often consulted by the Quraysh on many issues.

Fire would also play an important role in the superstitious belief of the desert Arab. Ever since mankind set foot on earth, fire has always been

³⁸ *Ka'baat* – Plural of Ka'bah; *Places of Worship*

perceived as a possessor of both good and evil. The good being the ability to cook, warm and provide light and the evil being the power of destruction, disfiguration and pain. Water, in the form of rain, was a necessity for the desert Arab as well as the crops they cultivated. If for any reason, the annual rain did not arrive as expected, the Arabs believed that their idols or gods were displeased with them. In order to regain their pleasure and quell their displeasure, they felt the necessity to undertake huge sacrifices for this. They would gather together much of their livestock, tents and goods on a mountain plain and would offer Qurbani (sacrifice) using fire, hoping that this would please the idols and thus bring rain.

Other Arabs would use fire in different ways; some would light bonfires each night believing that by doing so it would please their gods and in turn prosperity would be brought upon their tribe. During the day the bonfires would be allowed to simmer producing copious amounts of smoke that could be seen from afar. Often the smoke would be so intense that travellers passing through them would die from smoke inhalation. Those that died in this manner would be venerated in the thought that they had been chosen by the idols as sacrificial offerings.

The Social System

Since the beginning of mankind, the male gender has always held a dominant role over the female gender largely because men have been created with a greater strength and fortitude than women. The history of women has been quite bleak throughout the ages; Hindu wives would be burnt on funeral pyres when their husbands had passed away, during the time of the European Dark Ages, women were described as being animals with the ability to converse and even in this day and age, women are treated as sex-toys and objects of absolute pleasure, vying for some sort of perceived 'equality' in the Kufr dominated society we now live in.

In the time of Arab Jahiliyyah, a similar situation was to be found. The Arab men were busy increasing the number of wives and partners they had; unrestricted by any form of Divine guidance. Despite this love for women and thus the ensued obligation of having female offspring, a propensity for male offspring was desired. If a female daughter was bestowed upon a family, it was felt that this brought humiliation and dishonour upon the tribe. Some of the Arab fathers would go to the extreme lengths of burying their daughters alive in order to protect their honour in the eyes of their tribe members.

A brief study of the Arab social system, focusing in particular on the social dealings and interactions between the male and female genders, will highlight the depths of ignorance and devastation present in Arab society, as a result of the rulings of man in the absence of Divine Law.

Male & Female Relationships

The general consensus of the people dictated the importance for women to be constantly under the custodianship of man. Thus, if for any reason a woman's father had passed away, it was paramount that she was to marry as soon as possible. Women who had not been married had no honour in the sight of the Arab man. However, the marriage relationships (Nikah) between men and women took a variety of different forms;

Nikah Al-Ashraf: This was the way the Arab *awaam* (general public) would conduct their marriages. The potential husband would seek the consent of the daughter's father for her hand in marriage. If the father accepted, then the marriage would be endorsed. This form of Nikah was the only system of marriage, which Islam had endorsed and allowed to continue. The prohibited forms of Nikah included, Nikah An-Tamatuk, Nikah Un-Rahud, Nikah al-Mubarda and Nikah Ul-Allamat.

Nikah Tamatuk: This was a form of Nikah similar to marriage as we perceive today. The man would choose a woman, marry her and offer a dowry. However, as opposed to marriage where the couple hope to live together until Allah (swt) wishes separation in the form of death or divorce, this Nikah would be conducted for a fixed duration of time. Thus, the couple would live together as husband and wife, and when the agreed time would elapse, they would be divorced. Time limits of years, months or even minutes were suggested, and unfortunately amongst the ignorant and the deviants, this practice has continued today despite Islam forbidding it in all forms, be they Tamatuk or Mut'ah.

Nikah Al-Mubarda: This marriage contract was between a nobleman and the husband of a lady. The husband would offer his wife to sleep with the nobleman for a few nights in order to bring offspring of a noble lineage. It was considered great honour and dignity for the nobleman to accept, and it was believed that any child from this relationship would carry the same blessings and bounties of the nobles.

Nikah Al-Allamat: Despite coming under the heading of marriage, this was essentially a form of prostitution that occurred in Arabia. Women would leave vibrantly coloured banners with distinctive markings on their tents to advertise their availability for business. Were the woman to conceive, she was allowed to attribute the paternity of the child to whomever she believed the father to be. In Makkah, this was an accepted practise and was a recognised means of income.

Nikah Al-Mufatakah: Women would marry themselves to a group of less than ten men and would have relationships with each man. If and when she were to fall pregnant, she could chose whomever she wanted the father to be from the group of men. The paternity of the child would then be accepted to be of this father.

Other forms of Nikah that were socially acceptable practices amongst the Arabs included; the forcible taking of a married man's wife following his murder and also relationships with slave-girls. Under Arab rule since slave-girls had no rights, they were often kidnapped and raped to satisfy the Arab men's desires. Despite this clear injustice, they were unable to bring their perpetrators to task because of their lowly status in Arab society.

Divorce

Naturally, not all marriages pass through times of constant bliss and happiness and when problems are too great to be reconciled, divorce is often the only option. Similarly for the Arab Jahiliyyah this too was the case. The system would oblige both parties' consent for the divorce through provision of their signatures. Although this seems normal practice, following the divorce the woman was denied the right to remarry and was compelled to return to her family to live out the remainder of her life. If she did not fulfil this condition, and did eventually remarry, the divorced husband could exercise his right to kill his ex-wife since it was felt that his honour had been violated. As we can see, women played no significant role in the Arab world; and were largely considered as a tool for sexual gratification. Despite the fact that women were free to mix and sleep with as many different men as they wished, they were always viewed as a disposable commodity. The only women who commanded any real respect from the Arab men were the sorcerers and soothsayers; who were often consulted on matters of dispute or advice.

Abortion

The main form of abortion practised by the Arabs was the burying of their daughters. Allah (swt) mentions in the Qur'an how the Arabs would react to the birth of a baby girl;

وَإِذَا بُشِّرَ أَحَدُهُم بِالْأُنثَىٰ ظَلَّ وَجْهُهُ مُسْوَدًّا وَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ

"When news is brought to one of them, of (the birth of) a female (child), his face darkens, and he is filled with inward grief!"³⁹

He (swt) also mentions that the child is innocent of any wrongdoing:

وَإِذَا الْمَوْءُودَةُ سُئِلَتْ بِأَيِّ ذَنْبٍ قُتِلَتْ

"When the female (infant), buried alive, is questioned; for what crime she was killed"⁴⁰

This practice of burying daughters alive emerged as families' consistently desired male offspring to carry the tribal name and honour. They felt that their daughters would bring shame and humiliation to their family since it was common practice for tribes to kidnap daughters of other tribes as a form of retribution to dishonour them. Instead of having to deal with this situation, parents would prefer to bury their daughters alive rather than endure the embarrassment that may befall them.

Other families used to kill their children regardless of whether they were boys or girls for fear of poverty, a practice not too dissimilar to the reality of today where foetuses are aborted simply because the parents fear poverty and responsibility. Allah (swt) also addresses this type of practice;

وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ حَشِيَّةَ إِمْلَاقٍ نَّحْنُ نَرْزُقُهُمْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ إِنَّ قَتْلَهُمْ كَانَ خِطْئًا

كَبِيرًا

³⁹ Al-Qur'an - Surah An-Nahl, 16:58

⁴⁰ Al-Qur'an - Surah At-Takweer, 81:8-9

“Kill not your children for fear of want: We shall provide sustenance for them as well as for you. Verily the killing of them is a great sin.”⁴¹

With regards to the innocent children who were buried alive, it is narrated by Hasana Ibn Mu'awiyah that, *“I asked the Prophet (saw), ‘Who are in Paradise?’ He (saw) replied, ‘Prophets are in Paradise, martyrs are in Paradise, infants are in Paradise and children buried alive are in Paradise.’”*

The other common form of abortion used was the induction of a miscarriage, known as *Al-Iblas*. Women who continually produced female offspring would usually perform this. Instead of waiting for childbirth, oil would be placed on the tip of her womb (cervix) and then pressure was applied to her abdomen to induce a miscarriage, thus aborting the foetus.

Male contraception consisted of a crude form of vasectomy; whereby the testicles were removed to prevent sperm production. This was usually carried out only if a man had many wives and he feared poverty associated with having many children.

Adoption

In Arab Jahiliyyah adoption, *At-Tabani*, was a socially accepted practice. Although the understanding of adoption is usually the acceptance of other peoples children as one's own due to death of their parents or complete neglect, in Arab Jahiliyyah adoption was slightly different. It would take place when a man, who was usually of noble extraction or very wealthy, would see a young child or adolescent he admired and sought to adopt. Irrespective as to whether the child's father was alive or not, if both the child and the nobleman agreed to the adoption, the child would then be his. This practice was often performed in the

⁴¹ Al-Qur'an - Surah At-Isra', 17:31

presence of the child's real-father, not in fact to gain permission from him, but rather to humiliate him; demonstrating his inability to cater for his own child's needs.

On the advent of Islam, this form of adoption was rejected and Allah (swt) says regarding it;

مَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِرَجُلٍ مِّن قَلْبَيْنِ فِي حَوْفِهِ وَمَا جَعَلَ أَزْوَاجَكُمُ اللَّائِي تُظَاهِرُونَ
مِنْهُنَّ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ وَمَا جَعَلَ أَدْعِيَاءَكُمْ أَبْنَاءَكُمْ ذَلِكَ قَوْلُكُمْ بِأَفْوَاهِكُمْ

*"...Nor has He made your adopted sons your sons. Such is (only) your (manner of) speech by your mouths."*⁴²

Inheritance

Inheritance, *Al-Mirath*, deals with managing a deceased person's wealth in order to fulfil the rights of the inheritors. Arab Jahiliyyah had its own unique form of inheritance which was an established and accepted practice amongst them. It was devoid of any justice, fairness and sense. There were three main forms of inheritance, one amongst blood relations; *Al-Asbab Ul-Irth* (the cause of Inheritance), and two amongst non-blood relations; *Al-Hilth* (the Alliance) and *Al-Irth At-Tabani* (adopted inheritance).

Al-Asbab Ul-Irth

When the father, the head of the family passed away, only the male children would inherit from his wealth. If he had a number of sons, the son who inherited his father's wealth would be chosen depending on his strength, maturity, capability to ride a horse and ability to fight against his brothers. The result of this was that women, whether they were daughters, mothers or even wives would never inherit any property from their menfolk.

⁴² Al-Qur'an - Surah Al-Ahzaab, 33:4

Al-Hilth

Whilst still alive, some Arabs would often make *Al-Hilth* (agreements) between themselves with regards to inheritance. Often they would say, *"My blood is your blood, my calamity is your calamity, you will inherit from me and I will inherit from you. You shall seek out those who may kill me and I will seek out those who may kill you."* If both parties agreed to this, then Al-Hilth would be conducted. If either of the two parties died, the remaining party would receive one-sixth of the deceased person's bequest (the rest being inherited as through Al-Asbab Ul -Irth).

However, if conditions in the original agreement were stipulated regarding amounts that were greater than one-sixth of ones bequest these would have to be met and one could inherit up to one-half of the deceased person's wealth through this way.

Al-Irth at-Tabani

As we have already mentioned, the process of adoption was concluded when both parties (i.e. foster father and adopted child) agreed to the adoption. The fostered child had the same right as any natural child to inherit from his foster father. However, if the adopted child was an only child i.e. there were no other natural children, he would inherit all of his foster father's property.

The Arab social system was a cause of oppression to the Arab people. The injustice and unfairness demonstrated by it led to much dispute and disgruntlement. Islam came to revolutionise and uproot this entire system as the Arab system was based upon man's instincts and desires rather than any form of Divine code. Islam thus eradicated these customs and traditions replacing them with a just and complete system that catered for all the needs of mankind and not just the needs of a few. Islam came as a unique, Divine system that is not restricted by time, place or people. But rather is a system designed to cater for the whole of humanity until the Day of Judgement.

The Media of Quraysh

The state run media of any country desires to propagate the predominant views and ideas regarding various issues to their public audience. However, despite this superficial banality, often coupled with this is the desire to control the minds of the masses. The media department of Quraysh was no different; it was a propaganda tool that would educate the masses as to how Quraysh wanted them to live their lives as well as a tool that would manipulate public opinion. To maintain the status quo, in that the ruling elite could sustain their seats of power and consolidate their authority, it was ensured that control of the media lay firmly in their hands thus making certain that nobody else's opinions or voices could be heard. The media of Makkah fell into several divisions and utilised all available means to attain this objective.

Poetry

Prior to the advent of Islam, the Arab nation was largely ignored in the international arena since they represented a backward civilisation living in arid and barren lands. Despite the fact that the desert Arabs were unable to contribute a great deal to the advancement of mankind, one attribute that they possessed was the use of their native tongue, the Arabic language. The Arabs were extremely proud with the prowess and aptitude they had in their language and would often write extremely long ballads and poetry expressing their emotions and feelings.

Poetry was in common usage, and rather than being an 'elitist' form of communication as perhaps is the case today, the Arabs would use poetry in everyday conversation. It was a well known fact that poets would congregate ritually in the markets of Makkah to compete in public competitions where often it was said that the hearts and minds of the people would be captured by the poetic language used therein; stressing the extremely high standards that were attained.

The competitions were not only used by the poets to express their innermost emotions, but were also used to disseminate information and news about the on-goings in both the Arab and non-Arab worlds. In this regard, when Muhammad (saw) began to call Quraysh to the Deen of Islam, the poets of Quraysh utilized their gift in poetry against him (saw) and his call. They began to address him (saw) with malicious names so that Makkah society would label him thus and consequently avoid listening to him and the recitation of the Holy Qur'an. They used to call him *'the Madman', 'the Insane', 'the Poet', 'the Storyteller', 'the Fundamentalist', 'the Sonless', 'the Extremist', 'the Deviant', 'the Magician of Words'* and *'the one who separates the father from the son and the mother from the daughter'*. Allah (swt) would consistently inform the Messenger Muhammad (saw) of the poets' plots and sayings and would provide solace and succour in the form of ayat promising the Kuffar a terrible and ever-lasting torment.

Fire and Smoke

The role fire and smoke played in the superstitious psyche of the desert Arab has already been highlighted. Fire was used as a means of communication in that it was believed the different shapes, colours and forms the flame would take would represent different messages. A few people from amongst the Quraysh were given the role of interpreting what the flames had to say; and would often use the opportunity either to pass messages to the people or make declarations of arrest and even assassination against others. Quraysh would even go as far as to declare public states of emergency if it was believed the flames had declared such.

This form of practice was accepted in society since it played on the superstitions of the masses. Quraysh utilised this to their full benefit as they were able to carry out actions under the pretext of the signs of the fire which would then not be brought to question by the people.

Public gathering and declarations

Quraysh would often announce official engagements and daily news broadcasts to the people at certain well-known public locations such as Mount Safa and Marwa. The most prominent location where public declarations were proclaimed was at the door of the Ka'bah. Only those of Noble lineage were allowed to pronounce such declarations at these preordained sites. For this reason they were unable to physically prevent Muhammad (saw) from inviting the Qurayshi society to Islam when he famously addressed the people from Mount Safa and proclaimed his call publicly, since he (saw) met this criteria being of the Noble Hashimie tribe.

Reporters

Quraysh would employ people whose sole job was to listen to, note down and carry the information passed by poets in different cities to other towns, much in the same way as the newspaper reporters of today. These 'reporters' would wait patiently in the marketplaces and when the town dwellers had offered some money for the latest news, they would then begin their addresses.

In Makkah, being a place of gathering, there were designated areas known as 'camps' for the reporters where each one would narrate news and topics from differing areas. Some camps were selected to discuss international news such as the situation in the Roman and Persian empires whilst others would mainly deliberate national news. There were also areas set up solely to dispraise those who rebelled against the government; and when Muhammad (saw) began to receive revelation several of these sprung up dispraising both the Message bearer (saw) and the Message of Allah (swt).

This form of controlling the news illustrates the effectiveness of the Qurayshi media structure. They were able to decide what would be heard by the people in the different areas and would also command a

price for the service. At the same time, they were able to 'expose' and dispraise all those who held opinions contrary to their own at the time, effectively banishing them from importance and weight in the eyes of the people.

Storytellers

Storytelling was a powerful means by which information could be passed to the people subliminally since large numbers would gather and listen attentively to what the storytellers had to say. They were able to entrance their listeners by their charisma, entertain them with their humour and wit whilst concurrently conveying certain concepts and ideas to them. Quraysh realised their potential influence and so ensured that the bulk of storytellers had given allegiance to their authority.

Markets

The markets were not only a location where goods and items were traded, it represented a place where poetry and ideas were passed.

Pigeons

In an age without electronic mail, internet and fax machinery, it was still paramount to have facilities to send vital information quickly and over far distances. Quraysh would often use carrier pigeons, utilising their natural instinct of returning to their homeland for this purpose and would attach the messages to the feet of the birds.

Quraysh managed to control and utilise the media for their own benefit by ensuring that only the opinions and ideas of the Noble people of Makkah (*al-Ashraaf*) from the Parliament (*Dar-al Nadwah*) were carried and transmitted. By doing so, they made certain that any news or information that was transmitted to the people would conform to the ideals and standards the ruling elite desired.

Al-Waleed Ibn Mughirah

Quraysh designated al-Waleed Ibn Mughirah to be in charge of the affairs of the Media department. He was responsible for the poets of Makkah and the contents of their poetry. Quraysh's strict hold of the media in and around the Ka'bah was due to the fact that it laid centre to their society. It was a highly sensitive location, in that people of trade stood side by side with people of worship and during the Hajj season, the tourists and the travellers would sit side by side with the soldiers and those of authority. It was a place where, when news broke out, it would reverberate throughout all the tribes of the Arabian Peninsula since they often had representatives in and around the Ka'bah.

If anyone were found to disagree with the government and publicly voice their concerns, al-Waleed bin Mughirah would designate a poet whose purpose would be to attack and defame these culprits. From the time Muhammad's (saw) call became public and he (saw) began to attack the Qurashi way of life, al-Waleed bin Mughirah nominated several poets to follow and counter whatever Muhammad (saw) would recite and say. Amongst the poets who were employed solely to slander the Prophet Muhammad (saw) were Abdullah bin Rowaha (who later converted to Islam) and Labeed al-Rabee'ah.

Labeed al-Rabee'ah

Labeed al-Rabee'ah was from the tribe of Bani Sa'sa'ah and was one of the poets of Quraysh who would spend his time listening to the *ayat* of the Qur'an that were revealed to Muhammad (saw). Subsequently he would distort their meaning and include verses of slander towards Muhammad (saw) and then would transmit them to the people until Allah (swt) guided him to Islam. Once, when he had entered Islam, Umar bin al-Khattab (ra) asked him, "*Recite to us some of what you used to say in the past.*" Labeed al-Rabee'ah then began to recite Surah Al-aqarah.

Umar interjected, "I asked you to tell us what you used to say before (you accepted Islam)." He (Labeed) responded, "How can I recite what I used to say in the past? By Allah, if I would repeat it I would become an apostate!" This was because Labeed al-Rabee'ah was one of the many from Quraysh who would constantly bombard the Messenger of Allah (saw) with insults attacking his honour, pride, sanity and trustworthiness. However, when he embraced Islam he recanted all that he did in the past and used his poetry for the benefit of Islam.

Knowing the importance the poets wielded in Arab society, Allah (swt) revealed ayat of the Qur'an cursing and exposing them to be liars and people not to be trusted. He (swt) says;

هَلْ أُنَبِّئُكُمْ عَلَىٰ مَن تَنَزَّلُ الشَّيَاطِينُ ۖ تَنَزَّلُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ أَفَّاكٍ أَثِيمٍ ۚ يُلْقُونَ
السَّمْعَ وَآكُثِرُهُمْ كَاذِبُونَ ۚ وَالشُّعْرَاءُ يَتَّبِعُهُمُ الْغَاوُونَ ۚ أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّهُمْ فِي كُلِّ
وَادٍ يَهِيمُونَ ۚ وَأَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ مَا لَا يَفْعَلُونَ ۚ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا
الصَّالِحَاتِ وَذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا وَانْتَصَرُوا ۚ مِن بَعْدِ مَا ظَلَمُوا وَسَيَعْلَمُ الَّذِينَ
ظَلَمُوا أَيَّ مُنْقَلَبٍ يَنْقَلِبُونَ

*"Shall I inform you (O people!) upon whom the Shayateen descend? They descend on every lying sinful person. Who gives ear and most of them are liars. As for the poets, the erring ones follow them. See you not that they speak about every subject in their poetry? And that they say what they do not do. Except those who believe and do righteous deeds and remember Allah much and vindicate themselves after they have been wronged to the unjust poetry. And those who do wrong will come to know by what overcoming they will be overturned."*⁴³

⁴³ Al-Qur'an – Surah As- Shu'ara', 26:221-227

Despite the revelation of these verses, the poetic onslaught and slander against the Messenger Muhammad (saw) and his companions (ra) continued unabated until Muhammad (saw) appointed Hasan bin Thabit as the first poet of Islam. In a Hadith⁴⁴ it is reported by Uthman bin Abi Sheeba that Hasan bin Thabit said to Muhammad (saw), *"O Rasoolullah, give me permission to expose them (Quraysh)."* Muhammad (saw) replied, *"Yes."* And it is reported by Saheeh Muslim⁴⁵ on the authority of A'iesha (ra) that Muhammad (saw) said to Hasan bin Thabit, *"O Hasan! Dispraise them (Quraysh). (Indeed) it is hashier for them than even the arrows (shot) at their chest."* Hasan replied, *"O Muhammad (saw)! By Allah; I will crush them! I will swallow them whole! I will annihilate them (with) my mouth the way I crush the food I eat."*

After this was said, Abdullah bin Rowaha and Ka'b ibnu Malik with Hasan bin Thabit began to vehemently expose and attack the Quraysh and their beliefs incessantly.

Internal Conflicts

The history of the Arabs in the Arabian Peninsula is littered with battles and conflicts. Unlike many of the battles today, which are largely fought for territorial or material gain, some of the tribal conflicts were fought for the most inane reasons. We include only a selection of these to demonstrate the nature of the Arab psyche.

Al-Harb Ul-Basous

One of the famous battles fought between tribes was the War of Basous (*Al-Harb Ul-Basous*), which took place between the tribes of Bakr and Taghlib. Bakr and Taghlib were brothers, both being from the sons of Wa'il. They fought against each other for a period of 42 years over a she-camel owned by an elderly lady by the name of Basous. The cause

⁴⁴ Hadith - Bukhari, Muslim, Ahmad, Hadith No. 2489

⁴⁵ Hadith - Saheeh Muslim, No. 2490

of the war has been reported as follows; the she-camel belonging to Basous was left alone to graze and consequently entered Taghlib Bin Wa'il's garden and destroyed it. A relative of Taghlib, Qulayb Bin Wa'il, witnessed this and became enraged. In an attempt to scare off the camel, he ran towards it and slashed it with his sword. The injured camel ran out of the garden and back to its owner, Basous. When Basous saw her camel, she began to wail continuously, *"What humiliation! What disgrace!"* until three men, including her brother Jassas Bin Murrah, heard her cries and went to Qulayb Bin Wa'il attacking and stabbing him. They left him to die of thirst in the hot desert, ignoring his pleas for water, thus violating an ancient Arab custom.

When the news spread about this incident, Banu Taghlib became enraged. Not due to the death, but rather because of the violation of the Arab custom. They confronted Banu Taghlib with this. No compromise could be reached and as a result, both sides took up arms against each other causing the war of Al-Basous.

Al-Harb Ul-Darhisa Wal Ghabra

Another famous battle was Al-Harb Ul-Darhisa Wal Ghabra. Darhisa and Ghabra were the names of two horses. Darhisa was a male horse owned by Khais Ibn Zuhir, whilst Ghabra was female and owned by Hamil Ibn Bandaar. The conflict arose when Khais and Hamil argued over whose horse was the faster and stronger. In order to resolve their dispute they decided to conduct a race.

Each person placed a bet of a hundred camels on their horse being the faster of the two. The length the race was to be run was determined by the distance an arrow travelled and both Hamil and Khais agreed that each horse should be given forty days in preparation for the race. Hamil, fearing losing the large purse, devised a plan to sabotage the race ensuring that his horse would win. He hired two men to take cover

behind a tree on the racecourse and they would jump in front of Darhisa's horse if it were in the lead.

During the actual race, Hamil's horse Ghabra, led throughout and crossed the finish line as the winner. Jubilant with victory, Hamil exclaimed, *"I am victorious"*. Seeing that his horse had lost, Kharis replied, *"No! Let us wait until they pass through the jungle and reach the flat plain outside"*.

When the horses entered the jungle, Kharis's horse overtook Ghabra's and eventually became triumphant. Kharis, who was now the victor, shouted, *"The winner always gets the last laugh!"* However, despite completion of the race, some villagers approached Kharis and retold how they had seen two men impeding his horse's progress during the race. Immediately, an argument erupted between the two and became so intense that eventually fighting broke out. In time, the two heads of Banu Kharis heard of the events that had taken place. They were divided on whom to give their support to; thus taking opposing sides leading to an ensuing war. The war lasted for forty years and many people of the same tribe were killed over a simple dispute!

Other Wars

Another famous war was the war of Al-Fujjar. This war was fought on five separate occasions, and was between the different tribes of the Arabian Peninsula. The Prophet Muhammad (saw), before he received revelation, witnessed the fourth battle of Al-Fujjar and was assigned by the Quraysh to collect and prepare arrows for archers in battle. The war finally ended on the fifth occasion due to the immense economic ramifications it had had, with the tribes meeting and agreeing to end the long running and bitter feud.

The fundamental cause of bloodshed between the tribes seemed to stem from the unconditional support each disputant was given in an

argument by their tribes, regardless of whether they were right or wrong. This principal lay at the heart of many disputes and wars amongst the Arabs, and was also responsible for the wars between Al-Aws and Al-Khazraj, Adis and Zubian, and between Abdul Shamir and Hashi.

These disputes are reminiscent of wars that also take place in this day and age when entire nations fight each other over imaginary lines and territorial markings known as borders. The Ethiopian-Eritrean conflict, in which hundreds of thousands have until now died, was as a result of only one square mile of barren land and is a prime example of how the world without Islam has reverted back to the days of ignorance.

Before Revelation

Tribal Lineage

It has been well documented that from Qusah Ibn Qulab came the four main tribes Abdul Uzzah, Abdul Manaf, Abdul Dar and Nuhura. From these tribes descended many other tribes including that of al-Hashim from Abdul Manaaf. Abdul Muttalib, the grandfather of Muhammad (saw), was of Hashimie descent thus making the Prophet Muhammad (saw) and his father both of the Qurayshi Hashimie tribe.

Abdul Muttalib and Abdullah

It is reported by Ibn Hisham that Abdul Muttalib was sleeping under a tree in the courtyard of the Ka'bah, when he had a dream. Initially, he dismissed the dream, ignoring its contents. However, as the dream repeated itself on three successive nights, he decided to act upon the visions that he saw.

In the dream, a voice commanded him to dig for water at an exact location. After spending three days digging with his son, Al-Harith, he found the wall of a well and a large stone that was impeding its water flow. After removing the stone, water began to gush forth from the well and thus Zamzam was discovered. This water would be the provision for the pilgrims that would attend the annual Tawaaf round the Ka'bah.

After establishing the flow of Zamzam, Abdul Muttalib made Du'a to Allah (swt) saying that if he received ten sons, he would be willing to sacrifice one of them at the Ka'bah as an offering to the idol Hubal.

Abdul Muttalib's Du'a was granted. Fatimah, the wife of Abdul Muttalib, bore ten sons. The last son was named Abdullah, and he was his father's most adored. When all ten sons reached maturity, he explained to them the oath he made to Allah (swt) and they were willing to honour it and accept the fate that may befall any one of them.

In order to choose the sacrificial son, the names of all of Abdul Muttalib's sons were inscribed on arrows of differing lengths and were presented to the idol Hubal. The arrows were shuffled, drawn and to the shock of Abdul Muttalib the name of Abdullah came to surface. As Abdullah was Abdul Muttalib's most beloved, he repeated the drawing of the lots, hoping to choose another son. However, to the sorrow of his father, Abdullah's name reappeared not once, but twice more. Reluctantly, the Qurayshi leader took Abdullah to the courtyard of the Ka'bah with a knife. A small crowd began to gather. On seeing this, Abu Taalib and some people from the Quraysh attempted to dissuade Abdul Muttalib from proceeding. On their guidance, he decided not to carry out the sacrifice; instead he was persuaded to visit a soothsayer in Khaybar for advice.

The soothsayer told Abdul Muttalib that instead of sacrificing his son, he should substitute this for a number of camels. In order to determine how many camels to sacrifice, he was advised to draw lots again with Abdullah's name on one arrow and 10 camels inscribed on another. If Abdullah's name was drawn, then the number of camels to be sacrificed would be increased by ten and the lots would be repeated until Abdullah's name no longer surfaced. Abdullah's name repeatedly emerged until the number of camels to be sacrificed came to a hundred. To the relief of everyone, including his father, Abdullah's life was spared and instead 100 camels were slaughtered as an offering in lieu of his son and distributed to the poor people.

After the dawn of his Prophethood, Muhammad (saw), often used to comment, *"I am the son (descended) of the two slaughtered men."* That being his father Abdullah, and his forefather the Prophet Isma'il Ibn Ibrahim (as).

The Year of the Elephant

The Ka'bah, the ancient House of Ibrahim and Isma'il (ra), attracted hoards of people from all over the Arabian Peninsula each year for pilgrimage. They travelled hundreds of miles from all around to visit the Ka'bah. Because of this, Makkah became enriched with trade and business like no other city in the whole of Arabia.

Tribes in other areas of Arabia witnessed the respect that Makkah and the Ka'bah enjoyed and began exploring ways in which pilgrims could be diverted from journeying to Makkah to their lands instead.

The Ghassanis built a house at Al-Hirah, while Abrahah Al-Ashram built a church in Sana'a, the main city of Yemen. The church was excessively decorated with expensive ornaments and statues using only the finest marble, gold and ivory. The construction of the church severely depleted Yemen's resources. However, Abrahah was not overtly concerned since he believed it to be an investment that would eventually reap the rewards and bring economic prosperity to Yemen and its people.

Despite the Yemenis being largely of Christian denomination, Abrahah was not troubled by the religious content of the building and was even willing to place the idols of the Arabs in the church, enticing them to make pilgrimage to it instead of the Ka'bah; his desire being to bring in wealth to his nation through tourism and trade.

Things however did not pass as Abrahah had intended. To his amazement he found that the Arabs were still travelling to the Ka'bah,

and to his disgust even the people of Yemen were journeying to Makkah, as they did not consider the church a valid destination for pilgrimage. It soon dawned on Abrahah that the only solution to stop the mass pilgrimage to Makkah would be to destroy the Ka'bah.

Abrahah gathered together a huge army and equipped them with towering elephants in order to destroy the Ka'bah. On hearing Abrahah's approach, a few tribes from Makkah united and formed an alliance to impede his advance, but they soon came to realise they were no match against his army.

On reaching the outskirts of Makkah, Abrahah ordered his men to seize the livestock of the Quraysh. They returned with one hundred camels belonging to Abdul Muttalib, the leader of the Quraysh.

An emissary, Hanatah Himyari, was despatched to Abdul Muttalib explaining that they had no intention of fighting the people of Makkah, but rather they solely wanted to demolish the Ka'bah. Abdul Muttalib responded, *"By Allah, neither do we intend to fight him (Abrahah) nor do we have the power to fight. It is the Holy House of Allah and a memorial to His most beloved slave Ibrahim. If Allah so wills, He Himself will protect it."* The emissary believed that a compromise could be reached between the two parties and so invited Abdul Muttalib to a dialogue with Abrahah at his camp.

After Abrahah met with Abdul Muttalib, he restated his intention to destroy the Ka'bah. Abdul Muttalib tried his utmost to dissuade him from this objective by offering one third of the crops of Tihamah.

Despite this amount of crops representing a lot in terms of wealth it was insignificant compared to what Abrahah had expected to earn if the pilgrims would travel to his church. Thus the meeting was concluded with no resolution.

Before returning to Makkah, Abdul Muttalib asked Abrahah to return the hundred camels, which were seized and due back to him. On this matter Abrahah replied, *"At first glance I was impressed by you. But now you disappointed me in this respect. Do you request from me the 100 camels which were taken from you and ignore the House which is your faith and the faith of your forefathers, which I have come to destroy?"* To this Abdul Muttalib replied, *"I am the owner of the camels. The House has its Owner who will protect it."* Out of arrogance Abrahah replied, *"There is no one to protect it from me"*. Abdul Mutallib said, *"This is between you and Him (Allah (swt))"*.

Returning back to his people, Abdul Muttalib began to organise the evacuation of the inhabitants of Makkah, and then he and the other leaders of the Quraysh went to the Ka'bah and asked Allah (swt) to protect it from the army.

Once the city had been evacuated, Abrahah summoned his army to attack the Ka'bah. As they approached the city, the elephants that they had brought to demolish the Ka'bah froze as they faced Makkah. Astonished by this, Abrahah directed his soldiers back to face Yemen; immediately, the elephants came back to life and began to move uniformly, away from Makkah. Abrahah once again turned his army to face Makkah, as they turned back towards the Ka'bah, the elephants froze again.

Amidst the ensuing chaos, flocks of birds began to emerge, wave after wave, each one armed with stones in their beaks. As they flew overhead, they began pelting the army, with many of the soldiers being stoned to death. The remaining few fled back to Yemen. Abrahah, having survived the initial attack, died in humiliation when he arrived back in Yemen as a reminder for all the people.

Amazed and bewildered by this phenomenon, the Arabs named this year “The year of the Elephants” and the Qur’an later reminded Muhammad (saw) and the Arabs of the event that occurred in the year that he (saw) was born;

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِأَصْحَابِ الْفِيلِ ۚ أَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ كَيْدَهُمْ فِي تَضْلِيلٍ ۚ
وَأَرْسَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ طَيْرًا أَبَابِيلَ ۚ تَرْمِيهِمْ بِحِجَارَةٍ مِّن سِجِّيلٍ ۚ فَجَعَلَهُمْ كَعَصْفٍ
مَّأْكُولٍ

“Consider what your Lord had done to the people of the elephant. Did he not undo their evil plot? And sent upon them wave after wave of flying stones of fire. Then he made them like green crops devoured (by cattle).”⁴⁶

When this Surah was revealed, the Arabs were amazed, as only a few of the elders knew in such detail what had occurred. This reconfirmed to the Muslims the truth to which Muhammad (saw) attested and astonished the non-Muslims who heard these verses.

Abdullah and Aminah

Abdullah was one of sons of Abdul Muttalib. He was twenty-four years of age when he was married and was the most respected from amongst his brothers. His father had chosen Aminah, the daughter of Wahb Ibn ‘Abdul Manaaf, to be his bride. Her father, Wahb Ibn ‘Abdul Manaaf, the leader of the tribe of Banu Zuhra, was its eldest and most honoured member. Abdullah and Aminah were married and lived in Makkah.

At the time, when Aminah fell pregnant with the child of her husband, Abdullah had to leave on a business trip to Syria. On his way back from As-Sham, Abdullah stopped by in Madinah where he fell ill; eventually

⁴⁶ Al-Qur’an – Surah Al-Feel, 105:1-5

passing away. He was buried in Yathrib and soon after this Muhammad (saw) was born.

The Birth of Muhammad (saw)

On the 12th of Rab'i ul-Awwal in the year of the Elephant, Aminah, the widow of Abdullah Ibn Abdul Muttalib, gave birth to Muhammad (saw). His name, given by his grandfather, was not common amongst the Arabs, but they were familiar with it. Muhammad (saw) was thus the son of Abdullah Ibn Abdul Muttalib, Ibn Hashim, Ibn Abdul Manaaf, Ibn Qusayy, Ibn Kilab, Ibn Murra, Ibn Ka'b Ibn Lu'ayy, Ibn Ghalib, Ibn Fihr, Ibn Malik, Ibn al Nadar, Ibn Kinana, Ibn Khusayma, Ibn Mudrika, Ibn Ilyas, Ibn Mudar, Ibn Nizar, Ma'add, Ibn 'Adnan.

Under the Care of Halimah

The first woman who suckled Muhammad (saw) after his mother was Thuwaybah, a servant of Abu Lahab. It was a well-known custom for the newly born children of the Arabs, to be fostered by Bedouin wet nurses, who would care for their every need.

Those of the people of Banu S'ad were well respected for the charm and elegance in their speech. It was the women from this tribe that arrived in Makkah to seek infants to nurse. However, no woman to whom Muhammad (saw) was offered agreed to have him entrusted to her. The prospect of an orphan child was not appealing since there was no father to receive much reward from.

Having rejected Muhammad (saw), like the rest of the tribeswomen of Banu S'ad, Halimah, the daughter of Abu Dhu'ayb, took him under her care when she could find no other child to suckle. Until the age of five, Muhammad lived with the tribe of Banu S'ad, and then was returned back to the care of Aminah.

The Death of Aminah and Abdul Muttalib

When Muhammad (saw) was six years old, he travelled with his mother to visit the grave of his father in Yathrib. On their return to Makkah, Aminah fell ill and died. Being buried in a place named Abwa. Muhammad (saw) was then taken under the guardianship of his grandfather, Abdul Muttalib who accepted him with open hands. It is reported by Ibn Hisham, that there used to be a mattress in the shade of the Ka'bah for Abdul Muttalib. His children would gather around the mattress in honour of their father, but Muhammad (saw) used to sit on it. When it was necessary for him to return home, Abdul Muttalib would say to the people, *"Leave my grandson. I swear by Allah this boy will hold a significant position,"* indicating the love and compassion the great chieftain of the Quraysh had for his grandson.

At the tender age of eight years, Muhammad (saw) witnessed the passing away of his beloved grandfather in Makkah. The young boy was then entrusted to Abu Talib Ibn Abdul Muttalib, the uncle of Muhammad (saw). In the same way as his father, Abu Talib took precedence of the son of Abdullah over his own children, Ali, Ja'far and Aqil.

The First Trip to As-Sham

In the twelfth year of Muhammad's (saw) life, Abu Talib decided to permit his nephew to accompany him with a merchant caravan to Syria. On arriving in Basrah, they were met by a monk, Bahirah, who welcomed them with a great feast. During the feast Bahirah recognized Muhammad (saw) and observed in him some signs of Prophethood. Consequently, Bahirah requested Abu Talib, *"Return to your home with this youth and guard him from the Jews; for great dignity awaits your nephew."* With this advice, the uncle and his nephew returned to Makkah.

The Fijjar War

At the time when Muhammad (saw) was fifteen years old, he experienced his first major war, the fourth war of Fijjar (The War of the Gangsters). This conflict was between the two alliances of Banu Quraysh and Banu Kinana against Banu Qais'ailan. The cause of the war was ignited by jealousy and animosity between the two factions.

The reason for this hatred was that these tribes wanted control of an important caravan, which the prince of Hirah used to send to the annual fair of Ukaaz. The war resulted in considerable loss of life and was given the name, the "*Sacrilegious War*", for they had fought in the prohibited months, violating the customs of the Arabs. Young Muhammad's (saw) role in this battle was restricted to the collection of arrows, which the enemy had fired. He would gather together and provide them to the Qurayshi fighters. This marked his (saw) first involvement in military operations. Other sources claim that Muhammad (saw) had actually participated in the war, firing the arrows against the enemy.

Due to the long duration of the war and the economic impact it had had on the pilgrimage, it was beneficial for all parties to come to a truce, therefore general peace was established in this tense atmosphere.

Hilf ul-Fudool

At the end of this series of wars, the Arabs gained a new perception of their affairs. They felt the need to suppress the violence and injustice that the traders faced when trading in Makkah and also to the poor, victimised people within the city.

Delegates of Banu Hashim, Banu Al Muttalib, Asad Bin 'Abd Al-'Uzza, Zahrah Bin Kilab and Taim Bin Murrah met together and ensured the rights for the travellers, traders and the destitute.

The Prophet (saw) played a key role in organising the alliance and he later expressed, *'I had a hand in making such an arrangement in the house of Abdullah Ibn Jad'an to which if I were invited again to help even after the advent of Islam, I would have undoubtedly participated once more.'*

Marriage with Khadijah (ra)

At the age of twenty-five, Muhammad (saw) married the honourable businesswoman and daughter of Khwailid, Khadijah (ra). According to Ibn Hisham she was forty years of age, and her late husband was Abu Hala. She managed her own business, and like any other, she used to hire men to transport her merchandise outside the country from which she gained a percentage of the profits. Muhammad (saw) was one of her traders, and hearing about his good manners and success in her business, Khadijah (ra) expressed her wish to marry him. The message was conveyed to Muhammad (saw) by his uncle, to which he willingly agreed. The marriage contract was witnessed by Banu Hashim and the heads of Mudar. As dowry, Muhammad (saw) gave 20 camels to Khadijah (ra).

Khadijah (ra) was the first woman to whom Muhammad (saw) married, and she bore all his children barring one, Al-Qasim, Zaynab, Ruqayah, Umm Kulthum, Fatima and Abdullah.

Rebuilding the Ka'bah

At the time when Muhammad (saw) was thirty-five years of age, the Quraysh wanted to rebuild the Ka'bah to improve the walls, which were made of loose stones, and provide a proper roof for it. In Makkah, a severe flood had engulfed the Ka'bah and its surroundings and as a result, the Ka'bah was nearly destroyed. After the flood had cleared, the Quraysh began to reconstruct the Ka'bah. At first they hesitated for fear that demolishing the existing damaged walls would put a curse from Allah on them. However Waleed Bin Al-Mugheerah Al-Mukhzumi stepped forward to begin breaking down the Yamani wall to which his

tribe was assigned. When the Quraysh witnessed that nothing befell Waleed, they too joined in helping him demolish the rest of the walls.

They successfully demolished the existing old walls and started to rebuild using stones of blue granite from Yemen, At-Ta'if and other places outside Makkah. The act of putting the Black Stone in its position was considered to be the highest honour, so each tribe was determined to claim this honour alone. An argument ensued between the tribes.

This quarrel lasted for five days with each party staking their claim for the honour of placing the Black Stone in its position. The Arabs once again came close to drawing their swords with bloodshed seeming imminent. Abu Omayyah Bin Al-Mugheerah Al-Mukhzumi, a respected chief amongst the tribes, stood forward and exclaimed: *"Let him who enters the Ka'bah decide on this issue."* By Allah's (swt) will, Muhammad (saw) was the first to enter the Sanctuary. People then turned to him (saw) and cried, *"Al-Amin (the trustworthy) has come. We are all content in your decision."*

Muhammad (saw) requested that the people bring a cloth, and he (saw) placed the Black Stone into it. He then asked the representatives of each of the tribes to lift the cloth together by holding each corner of it. The tribes simultaneously raised the cloth and then Muhammad (saw) took the Black Stone and placed it back to its position in the Ka'bah. Muhammad's (saw) ingenuity and wisdom thus dispelled the animosity, hatred and almost certain bloodshed that had existed between the tribes.

Quraysh ran short of funds required to rebuild the Ka'bah in totality, and so they removed six square yards from the northern side of the building, now named Al-Hateem. In addition to this, they raised the doors of the Ka'bah by two metres allowing only a select few to enter. When the building was fifteen yards high, a secure roof, resting on six

columns was constructed. This was the last time to this date that the Ka'bah had been maintained and restored.

The Prophethood

Preparation for Prophethood

The mission of any Prophet sent by Allah (swt) is an arduous and serious task. Studying the lives of the previous messengers, about whom Allah (swt) has revealed stories to us in the Holy Qur'an, it comes to light that many from amongst them were mocked, attacked and even killed. Their families, followers and they themselves were targeted simply due to the message they carried. Therefore, anybody who is to be a Prophet, will be nurtured by Allah (swt) ensuring that they do not do any evil acts nor perform any ill practises. This is clearly evident in the life of Muhammad (saw) before he received revelation.

In fact, Allah (swt) sent some indications directly to his servant through different forms, preparing him for this immense task. Many reports, most of which remain unverified by the Fuqaha, indicate that Muhammad (saw) received certain dreams and signs pertaining to aspects of life including business deals and transactions before his Prophethood.

It has been narrated in the books of Seerah that Muhammad (saw) often would see dreams in which an Angel would either communicate with him or show scenes of events that would then occur the next day in reality. If for example a business deal were to be conducted, a few nights before Muhammad (saw) would see a vision encompassing those involved and the fruitful success of the deal. It is narrated on the authority of A'iesha (ra) in Saheeh Bukhari and Muslim that, *"The commencement of the Divine Inspiration of Allah's Apostle was in the form of good dreams which came true like bright daylight, and then the love of*

seclusion was bestowed upon him. He used to go in seclusion in the cave of Hira where he used to worship (Allah alone) continually for many days before wishing to see his family. He used to take with him provisions for the stay and then come back to (his wife) Khadijah to eat his food again as before."

The Cave of Hira

It was common practice amongst the Arab Bedouins to spend some time in retreat away from the spiritual restraints of the material world. Often places isolated from the busy market places and city centres were chosen and time spent thinking and contemplating about life and its purpose was enjoyed. This practice was known as *Tahannuf*.

Muhammad (saw) himself was not excluded from this practice; rather, he (saw) spent long periods, often weeks at a time, away by himself in a cave known as Hira.

The cave to which Muhammad (saw) would go is found at the head of Mount Hira, located two miles to the North of Makkah. He (saw) often spent the whole month of Ramadhan in quiet contemplation, emulating the traditions of the Prophet Ibrahim (as) before him. Food and provisions were provided to him from time to time by a servant who was sent by Khadijah (ra), to whom he would return at the end of the sacred month.

Events Leading to Revelation

The visions were not the only form that Allah (swt) used as preparation for Prophethood. Other incidents that Muhammad (saw) saw before revelation included a stone with the ability to talk. It is reported that he (saw) said *"I used to know a stone in Makkah and it used to salute me before I received the Wahi."*

Closer to the time of revelation, these visions became more frequent and, more importantly, the subject matter changed. Instead of the Angel

in the vision addressing situations and circumstances, it began to address Muhammad (saw) directly. The Angel would say to him (saw) *"You are the Prophet. And you have been chosen to lead"*. This came as a shock to Muhammad (saw) since the dreams he was used to having did not address him directly rather they provided him comfort and happiness in what they were predicting. The dreams now seemed to indicate a future purpose and role for Muhammad (saw). A role that would require him to be the future Prophet and the Angel communicating with him would be the intermediary between himself and the Almighty Allah (swt).

At first Muhammad (saw) was confused as to the significance of these visions. His loving and reassuring wife, Khadijah (ra), would always provide solace and reassurance that Allah (swt) would never allow any harm to befall him since he had always been Al-Amin (the faithful).

Revelation

It is reported that on a night between the 10th and the 29th of Ramadhan 610 C.E. The Prophet Muhammad (saw), who was approaching 40 years of age, was lying asleep and was awoken by the Angel Jibrael (as).

It is reported by A'iesha (ra) in Bukhari that, *"The angel came to Muhammad (saw) and asked him to read. The Prophet (saw) replied, "I do not know how to read." The Prophet (saw) added, "The angel caught me (forcefully) and pressed me so hard that I could not bear it any more. He then released me and again asked me to read and I replied, "I do not know how to read." Thereupon he caught me again and pressed me a second time until I could not bear it any more. He then released me and again asked me to read but again I replied, "I do not know how to read (or what shall I read)?" Thereupon he caught me for the third time and pressed me, and then released me and said,*

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ
يَخْلَقُ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ يَاقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ
الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ يَعْلَمُ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ

“Read in the name of your Lord, who has created (all that exists), has created man from a clot. Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous. Who taught man what he knew not.”⁴⁷

Significance of ‘Iqra’

The request of the Angel Jibrael (as) to the Prophet Muhammad (saw), “Iqra” and Muhammad’s (saw) reply, “Ma Iqra” (I do not recite) may seem to contradict the established fact that Muhammad (saw) was illiterate; this being confirmed through numerous narrations of ahadith.

A question arises as to why then did Jibrael (as) request Muhammad (saw) repeatedly to “Iqra” if he knew full well that he (saw) was unable to read or write? If we look closely to the narration of A’iesha (ra) on this incident, it is evident that even on the third attempt when Jibrael (as) asks Muhammad (saw) to recite, he does not wait for Muhammad (saw) to recite, but rather the angel himself recites the verses. Thus, rather than educating Muhammad (saw) on the Arabic language and the construction of sentences, the Angel desired something else. It was not the literacy that was being sought, rather the comprehension, understanding and memorisation of what was being recited. This is also proven by the fact that Muhammad (saw) remained illiterate even after this incident. It should be noted that the Prophet (saw) did not say, “La fahimtu” (I do not understand) rather he said “I do not read”. Therefore, he (saw) comprehended and understood what was required of him and delivered it as it was revealed to him directly to the people.

Moreover, the word “Iqra” is the second person masculine imperative form of the root verb *Qara’a*. The root *Qara’a* linguistically is not

⁴⁷ Al-Qur’an – Surah Al-’Alaq, 96:1-5

confined to meaning only reading; rather it also denotes comprehension, awareness, exploration, study and contemplation. It can thus be said of the scholars who translate the word "*Iqra*" to mean solely "reading" that they have not entirely given a complete understanding of its meaning.

To reinforce this, we have many ahadith which draw clear distinctions between reciting and understanding. On the authority of Abu Sai'd Al-Khudri, it is narrated that the Prophet Muhammad (saw) said, *"Soon there will appear disagreement and dissension in my people; there will be people who will be good in speech and bad in work. They recite the Qur'an, but it does not pass their collar-bones."* [Abu Dawood].

And in a hadith narrated by Abdullah Ibn Mas'ood the Prophet (saw) commented about some of the minor signs of the Day of Judgement and said, *"When your reciters are many and your men of knowledge are few, and your rulers are many and your trustworthy men few. And when you seek the wealth of this world by the means of the actions of the Next World and learn fiqh other than for the sake of Allah."* From these ahadith, it is evident that there exists a difference between the simple recitation of the Qur'an and the actual comprehension and acting upon its teachings.

The recitation of the Qur'an must be for the sake of comprehending, understanding and implementing in our lives and the lives of others. "*Iqra*" should not be confined to a few letters recited in a cave, rather it's meaning should be the founding principal of all actions since Allah (swt) says, *"he taught man what he knew not"*. This understanding of the Qur'an must reach man wherever he may be, whether he thinks he is literate or not, rich or poor, guided or misguided, ruler or servant. Perhaps in this age, where we think we are educated, literate and people of understanding, we do not actually comprehend, contemplate or think about the Qur'an and the message it carries. Rather, we simply recite the verses of the Qur'an in the manner that the Prophet (saw)

predicted we would, as seems apparent from our current situation and affairs.

Literacy is usually synonymous with reading and writing and thus is used for this purpose. Reading and writing is only essential in the passing of knowledge to those who are not present or to learn about those whom one has not and cannot meet. It must be said, however, that one who is illiterate may not necessarily be ignorant. Rather, an illiterate person is required to use the shrewdness and sharpness of other aspects of the intellect that Allah (swt) has bestowed upon them. In the case of Muhammad (saw), when it was required to speak to people he would either go himself or would send a delegation to communicate his thoughts and ideas. Thus not requiring the need to read or write.

The role of literacy in the Arab world was a particular skill necessary for the poets and the noblemen of Quraysh. They would often come into contact with the writings of other nations and were required to address their people on many subjects. For the common public, however, literacy was not essential in day-to-day living and consequently was not taught nor learnt by the masses.

The First Revelation

There is no difference of opinion amongst the Ulema of Islam, regarding Surah Al-Alaq being the first Surah to be revealed. There are many ahadith referring to this. It is reported by Abu Rajah At-Taridih that Abu Musa Al-Ashari used to visit the Muslims at the mosque of Al-Asra and said, *"We used to sit and have circles and he (Abu Musa) used to recite the Qur'an. I was looking at him and he used to wear two white clothes and from him I learnt the chapter of 'Al-Alaq' and he said that this is the first chapter that Allah (swt) had sent to the Prophet Muhammad (saw)."*

In Saheeh Muslim it is reported by Zuharir Bin Harib that Al-Waleed Bin Muslim said that Imaam Uzari said, *"I heard Yahya ask Abu Salamah 'Which part of the Qur'an was revealed first after Al-Alaq?' He said that the first thing after Al-Alaq is Ya Ayuhal Mudathir."*

Imaam Bukhari reported on the authority of A'iesha (ra) that, *"The first chapter sent to the Prophet Muhammad (saw) was Iqra. After that Ya Ayuhal Mudathir after that Ad-Duha"* and that has been mentioned by Ma'udie and Imaam Zuhuri. However, it has also been reported from A'iesha (ra) that when the Prophet Muhammad (saw) received the first five verses of the Chapter of Iqra he (saw) became worried not knowing what had happened to him. He (saw) was not sure as to whom or what he (saw) had seen or heard and so left the mountain.

The same voice that he had heard in the cave called unto him from the sky. Upon hearing this he (saw) gazed upwards and saw the Angel Jibrael in his true form. Wherever the Prophet Muhammad (saw) would turn he could only see the angel.

It is reported in Saheeh Muslim by the authority of Jabir Abdullah (ra) who was one of the companions of Muhammad (saw); *"He (saw) told us about the beginning of Wahi. He (saw) said to us 'Once I was walking, I heard a voice from the sky, I raised my head and I saw an angel. It was the same angel who visited me in the cave of Hira. He was sitting on a chair between the sky and the earth and as I came closer to him I became worried and as I came even closer to the angel I became terrified. Then I returned home shouting 'Zumiruni, Zumiruni' (Cover me! Cover me!). So I was given a cloak and blanket and I wrapped myself with it and I went to sleep worried. Suddenly I heard the voice of the angel saying 'Ya Ayuhal Mudathir kum fa Anzir Wa Rabaka Fakabir.'"*

In the Hadith of A'iesha (ra) in Bukhari it is narrated that the Prophet (saw) told Khadijah (ra) what happened and said, *"I fear that something*

may happen to me.” Khadijah replied, “Never! By Allah, Allah will never disgrace you. You keep good relations with your kith and kin, help the poor and the destitute, serve your guests generously and assist the deserving calamity-afflicted ones.”

This was the second revelation to Muhammad (saw). Whilst he was wrapped up in the blankets, worried by what had happened to him Allah (swt) revealed,

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُدَّثِّرُ قُمْ فَأَنذِرْ ۚ وَرَبَّكَ فَكَبِّرْ ۚ وَنَبِيَّكَ فَطَهِّرْ ۚ وَالرُّجْزَ فَاهْجُرْ

“O the one who has been wrapped up, rise up and warn your people and call them and elevate your lord and purify your clothes and desert all Jahiliyyah and Kufr.”⁴⁸

Waraqah Ibn Naufal

Khadijah accompanied Muhammad (saw) to her cousin Waraqah Bin Naufal Bin Asad Bin ‘Abdul ‘Uzza, who, during the pre-Islamic Period became a Christian and used to write and understand Hebrew. He was an old man who had lost his eyesight and would write from the Gospel in Hebrew as much as Allah wished him. Khadijah said to Waraqah, “O my cousin! Listen to the story of your nephew,” Waraqah asked, “O my nephew! What have you seen?” Allah’s Apostle (saw) described what he had seen. Waraqah replied, “This is the same person who keeps the secrets (angel Jibrael) whom Allah (swt) had sent to Moses. I wish that I were young and could live till the time when your people will turn you out.” Allah’s Apostle asked, “Will they drive me out?” Waraqah replied in the affirmative and said, “Anyone who came with something similar to what you will bring was treated with hostility; and if I should remain alive till the day when you will be turned out, then I will support you firmly.” However, after only a few days of this meeting, Waraqah passed away and the Divine Inspiration to Muhammad (saw) was also paused.

The Revelation Subsides

After the encounter with the angel Jibrael (as), Muhammad (saw) expected revelation to come to him daily. However, this was not to be. He became frustrated, not understanding why Allah (swt) was no longer communicating with him. He felt Allah (swt) was displeased with him and had stopped revealing the message to him. However, after a period of six months Allah (swt) revealed the following verses to reassure him (swt),

وَالضُّحَىٰ ۚ وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا سَجَىٰ ۚ مَا وَدَّعَكَ رَبُّكَ وَمَا قَلَىٰ ۚ وَلَلْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لَّكَ
مِنَ الْأُولَىٰ ۚ وَلَسَوْفَ يُعْطِيكَ رَبُّكَ فَتَرْضَىٰ ۚ أَلَمْ يَجِدْكَ يَتِيمًا فَآوَىٰ

“By the Forenoon and by the night when it grows still. Your Lord has not forsaken you. Nor is He displeased with you. Surely, the end shall be better than the beginning. Your Lord will soon give you of His bounty and you will be well pleased. Did he not find you an orphan and give you shelter. Did He not find you astray and guided you. Did He not find you dependent and made you independent.”⁴⁹

The First Muslims

It is reported in Saheeh Bukhari and Muslim at the time of Prophethood, when Muhammad (saw) was sent to Mankind with the message of Islam, he first invited his wife Khadijah (ra), and she believed in him, then he invited his cousin Ali (ra) and he believed in him and then he began inviting people to Islam, some believed and some rejected. However the first believer amongst the women was Khadijah and the first believer from amongst the youth was Ali (ra) and the first believer from amongst the men was Abu Bakr (ra).

⁴⁸ Al-Qur'an – Surah Al-Muddaththir, 74:1-5

⁴⁹ Al-Qur'an – Surah Ad-Duha, 93:1-6

Abu Bakr (ra) and his Influence

Abu Bakr Ibn Abu Quhafah Al-Taymi was a close friend of Muhammad (saw) since childhood. He was only two years younger than the Prophet and was a well-known merchant. He had much power and influence amongst the Quraysh due to the respect people had for him. When Abu Bakr accepted Islam he in turn revealed his belief to the people. He campaigned for Allah and for his Messenger as the people held him in high esteem, since they enjoyed his company and would consult him on many affairs. He used his influence to persuade Usman Ibn Affan, Zubari Ibn Awaam, Abdur-Rahman Ibn Awaf, Sa'id Bin Abi Waqqas and Talha Ibn U'baidillah to the fold of Islam by bringing them to the Messenger (saw) where they all confirmed their belief and then offered their prayer to Allah.

The Initial Da'wah

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) began to call people to worship Allah (swt) alone and to reject their own traditional religions that were based on worshipping Allah (swt) through intermediaries, the idols. It is clear from the life of Muhammad (saw) that he had two types of call. The first call was public and the second private. He used to call publicly to the Deen, but would also invite certain individuals privately to Islam. It was very natural for the Prophet to invite the nearest people to him to Islam; he invited his family as well as his friends. He called others whom he felt would be inclined to the truth and he invited those whom he felt would trust him. Many of them responded favourably to him and they believed in him, these included Khadijah, Ali, Abu Bakr and even his servant Zayd Bin Haritha, they all embraced Islam on the same day at the beginning of the Da'wa.

Among the people who accepted Islam in the early stage of the Da'wa was Bilal Bin Raba'a al-Habashi, Abu Ubayda Bin al-Jarrah and Abu Salaama Bin Abdu Asad and Arkam Bin Abi Arkam and Uthman Bin Madou and his two brothers Qudamah and Abdullah and Obaidah Ibn

Harith, Said Bin Zaid and his wife Fatima Bint Khattab (sister of Omar) and Khabaab Bin Arad and Abdullah Ibn Masoud, they are known as *As-Sabikoon Al -Awaloon*. Ibn Kathir mentioned them to be more than 40 altogether. The news of Islam spread throughout Makkah and even reached outside Makkah. This was because the Prophet Muhammad (saw) spoke out openly. These people who met Rasoolullah used to gather together and were taught the Deen secretly. Da'wah at this time was focused on the individual, i.e. one to one, privately and secretly.

The Initial Form of Prayer

During this turbulent period, Allah (swt) requested the Muslims to pray. It was a prayer unlike the prayer we know today since the rules of prayer were revealed at a later point in the Prophethood. Usumukatil Bin Sulayman reported that the first thing Allah (swt) made obligatory at the beginning of the revelation was the prayer, which consisted of two Rakat in the morning and two Rakat in the evening. Allah (swt) said, *"Glorify your lord in the night and in the morning."*⁵⁰

Zaid Bin Haritha reported that the Prophet Muhammad (saw) said, *"Jibrael came to me and taught me the Wudu"* and also reported that Muhammad (saw) went with a few Muslims to the Shi'ab of Makkah whenever the time of Salat entered to perform the prayer. This continued regularly.

Abu Taalib Witnesses the Prophet's Prayer

Once the Prophet (saw) was with Imaam Ali (ra) who was hiding himself from his father (Abu Taalib) and they were praying together on the Hills of Makkah. Abu Taalib found them praying and said, *'O my nephew, what is this religion that I find you committed to?'* He replied, *'O my uncle this is the Deen of Allah, the Deen of the angels and the Deen of the messengers, the Deen of our father Ibrahim. God sent me as a messenger to the*

⁵⁰ Al-Qur'an - Surah Al-Mu'min, 40:55

people. O my uncle, you are worthy of my advice and the call to the guidance. It befits you to respond and help me since you are the best (amongst those) to do so.' Abu Taalib said, 'O son of my brother (nephew). I cannot leave the religion of my father and what they used to follow. But by God I will never let anything bad happen to you as long as I am alive.'

The House of Al-Arqam

The Prophet (saw) and his Sahabah had to offer prayers in the mountains around Makkah as the Quraysh began to harass and disturb the Muslims during their prayers. This continued for around three years until Arqam Bin Abi Arqam embraced Islam through the Da'wah of Abu Bakr (ra).

Arqam lived in his house with his elderly father. Since his house was spacious, he offered it as a place of refuge, prayer and a meeting place for Muhammad (saw) and the Muslims. From within this house the Messenger Muhammad (saw) taught his companions the Qur'an, perfected their knowledge about Islam and encouraged them to practice it.

Whenever a person from the Quraysh became Muslim, Muhammad (saw) would invite them to the House of Arqam where he would teach them and would perform the Tahujjud Salat with them, thus developing their belief and preparing them for the struggle, which they were soon to endure.

The Initial Reaction of the Quraysh

The news of the Da'wah spread throughout Makkah. At first nobody paid much attention to Muhammad (saw) and his companions as it was felt that they were of those religious people who used to speak about Christianity and Judaism before. Others ignored them thinking that they only spoke about the Lordship of Allah the way Ummaya Bin Abi Salt, Quayss Bin Saidah, Amru Bin Nafeen and others used to do.

However, the Quraysh become increasingly concerned when Rasoolullah (saw) used to pass statements addressing some of their customs and interests and even going as far as attacking their idols. The news about his (saw) call then began to spread; eventually becoming a matter of great concern after about three years.

The Public Call

The Public Proclamation

After three years of calling people individually and secretly to Islam, Allah (swt) sent revelation to Muhammad (saw) which ordered him to go out publicly with his companions and challenge the law and order of the society in which they lived. They were now to struggle directly against the Baatil, attacking the Qurayshi customs, idols and way of life. Allah (swt) says,

وَأَنْذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ ۖ وَاخْفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِمَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ فَإِنْ
عَصَوْكَ فَقُلْ إِنَّي بَرِيءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ

*“And warn your tribe (O Muhammad) of near kindred. And be
kind and humble to the believers who follow you. If they
disobey you say; ‘I am innocent of what you do.’”⁵¹*

When Allah (swt) revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (saw) the ayah, *“And warn your tribe of near kindred”* he (saw) climbed mount As-Safa and called down to the people below, “Ya Bani Hashim! Ya Bani Abdul Muttalib! Ya Bani Abdul Manaaf!” Altogether, around forty-five men heard and responded to the call. Abu Lahab was amongst them and he said, “All of your uncles and cousins are present here. Tell us what you want and leave all of your misguided folk. You should be aware that your people have no strength over the Arabs. We are those who have the right over you and you have (some) rights from us. Speak only to your family. That would be

⁵¹Al-Qur’an – Surah Ash- Shu’araa, 26:214-216

easier (for you) and would be less of a threat to the people of Quraysh.” He continued, “By God! I have never seen anybody bring more harm to their family than you.”

Muhammad (saw) did not respond to this provocation rather he (saw) called them again and said, *“Thanks be to God the One I praise and glorify and seek assistance (from) and I believe and rely upon and I bear witness there is no God but Allah the One Who has no partners. O People! The one who is a true leader and is guided will never lie to his people. By God, I am the Messenger of Allah (sent) to you and to the whole of mankind. By Allah, you are going to die the way you sleep and you will be brought alive (again) the way you awaken and you will be brought to account for all your deeds as there is (a place in) paradise or hell-fire forever.”*

His uncle Abu Taalib said, *“Nothing is more dear to us than to assist, help and support you. And there is no one other than ourselves who will accept your advice and listen to you. The children of your forefathers have gathered here and I am one of them. However, I am the first one amongst them who accepts what you call for. Therefore continue to do what Allah (swt) has ordered you to do. By God, I will continue to protect and to support you. But my Nafs (heart) cannot persuade me to leave the Deen of Abdul-Muttalib and the Deen of our parents.”* Abu Lahab said, *“By God! This is an evil thing. Let us stop him (Muhammad) before anybody else does so”.* Abu Taalib reiterated, *“By God! I will protect him as long as I am alive.”*

This incident confirmed to the Prophet (saw) that the pledge of his uncle Abu Taalib to protect him was true, especially since he declared it publicly. And from this day the Prophet and his companions would gather at As-Safa and used to say to people of different backgrounds, *“O people! O our companions!”* And used to call them towards Tawheed, to believe in none but Allah, to submit to none but Allah and to obey none but Allah and to believe in the Prophethood of Muhammad (saw) and in the Last Day.

It is narrated by Abdullah Ibn Abbas, In the Hadith of Bukhari that when the Verse, *“And warn your tribe of near kindred”* was revealed, Allah’s Apostle went out, and when he had ascended As-Safa Mountain, he shouted, *“O Sabahah!”* The people said, *“Who is that?”* Then they gathered around him (saw), whereupon he (saw) said, *“Do you see? If I inform you that cavalymen are proceeding up the side of this mountain, will you believe me?”* They said, *“We have never heard you telling a lie.”* Then he said, *“I am a plain warner to you of a severe punishment which is coming.”* Abu Lahab said, *“May you perish! You gathered us only for this reason?”* Then Abu Lahab left. Allah (swt) then revealed the Surah,

تَبَّتْ يَدَا أَبِي لَهَبٍ وَتَبَّ
مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُ مَالُهُ وَمَا كَسَبَ
يَا سَيِّصُلَىٰ نَارًا ذَاتَ
لَهَبٍ
يَا وَامْرَأَتُهُ حَمَّالَةَ الْحَطَبِ
يَا فِي جِيدِهَا حَبْلٌ مِّن مَّسَدٍ

“Perish the two hands of Abu Lahab, and perish he! His wealth and his children (etc.) will not benefit him! He will be burnt in a Fire of blazing flames! And his wife too, who carries wood (thorns of Sa’dan which she used to put on the way of the Prophet (saw), or use to slander him)! In her neck is a twisted rope of Masad.”⁵²

When Allah (swt) revealed the ayat of Al-Lahab, the call became truly public and these verses reverberated throughout Makkah. This was because it made everybody realise that the Da’wah of Muhammad (saw) would now be open and on the offensive. All of the forms of kinship, friendship and tribalism which the Arabs felt that they united upon and could use to suppress the call of Muhammad (saw) were now defunct with the warning from Allah directly to his uncle Abu Lahab, a Nobleman of the Quraysh and a leader of Makkah. The impact of this

⁵² Al-Qur’an – Surah Al-Masad, 111:1-5

call continued to shake Makkah and was further propelled when the following ayat were revealed,

فَاصْدَعْ بِمَا تُؤْمَرُ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْمُشْرِكِينَ

“Proclaim publicly what I have ordered you and do not be concerned about the Mushriks.”⁵³

From this day the Prophet Muhammad (saw) started to attack all the customs, traditions and superstitions of the Quraysh’s way of life collectively and publicly. He began to ridicule their idols and their corruption and he did this, in his public Da’wah, by reciting the verses of the Qur’an, which cursed the idols, those who made them and those who submitted to them. The Sahabah emulated what he (saw) said and did, repeating the verses of the Qur’an that he (saw) quoted. The consequences of this call were severe, and at first caused complete uproar throughout Makkah.

The Attack on the Evils of Society

Following the revelation of the ayat ordering Muhammad (saw) to warn his and allied tribes about the message he (saw) was carrying, the call shifted from being one of individual persuasion to one that began to attack and expose the very fabric of society. Muhammad (saw) never subdued the ayat of the Qur’an that Allah (swt) sent down addressing the different aspects of Qurayshi society at large, but rather, he was unhesitant, vociferous and unrelenting in his proclamation of these teachings.

Addressing the Economic System

The Da’wah of Muhammad (saw) was so dynamic and powerful that it forced Quraysh to constantly debate and discuss his activities in their

⁵³ Al-Qur’an – Surah Al-Hijr, 15:94

Parliament. They argued between themselves how they should deal with Muhammad (saw) as he persistently attacked and exposed their way of life for the corruption it represented. It is reported by Imaam Abshyie that on Tuesday, the 'Day of Economy', Quraysh gathered together in Dar al-Nadwah to discuss the issues raised by Muhammad (saw) when he began to recite the verses of al Mutaaffifin,

وَيْلٌ لِّلْمُطَفِّفِينَ ۖ الَّذِينَ إِذَا اكْتَالُوا عَلَى النَّاسِ يَسْتَوْفُونَ ۖ وَإِذَا كَالُوهُمْ أَوْ
وَزَنُوهُمْ يُخْسِرُونَ ۚ أَلَا يَظُنُّ أُولَٰئِكَ أَنَّهُمْ مَبْعُوثُونَ

*"Woe to those that deal in fraud (their economic system),
Those who when they have to receive by measure from men
exact full measure. But when they have to give by measure or
weight to men give less than due. Do they not think that they
will be called to account?"⁵⁴*

Whenever the Prophet Muhammad (saw) would expose Quraysh's economic system, he would say, 'Do not sell by the stone⁵⁵ this is the trade of Jahiliyyah.' He (saw) would also call to the businessmen in the Market, 'The One who created you knows what is better for you,' they would reply, 'but we are trading now (i.e. not worshipping).' He (saw) would say, 'But you trade using the stone and the stone does not tell you if the goods are of a good or bad quality. Go and examine the goods; do you not have any intellect?"

By confronting one aspect of the Qurayshi system, Muhammad (saw)'s message began to spread, until even the transactions between people

⁵⁴ Al-Qur'an - Surah Al-Mutafifeen, 83:1-4

⁵⁵ A form of transaction in the time of Jahiliyyah whereby a stone is purchased by a customer for a fixed price and is thrown in the direction of objects of varying price; some of which were of a greater and others of a lesser value than the price of the stone itself. Whatever the stone would strike, that object would then be for the price of the stone.

were being affected. Once, a Makkan was engaged in a transaction to buy some property from Umayyar Bin Khalaf, who was a famous businessman and landlord with a representation in Dar An-Nadwah. After nominating the price of the stone and throwing it, the rock failed to land on the property the Makkan had desired, and he refused to settle his account, exclaiming, *"I will not accept it! This (transaction) is something immoral and God will curse it,"* Umayyar replied, *"Who taught this to you?"* the Makkan said, *"Muhammad (saw)."* An argument then ensued and Umayyar summoned the Quraysh to take the Makkan to Dar An-Nadwah to solve the dispute and discuss what Muhammad (saw) had said. In An-Nadwah, Abu Sufyan castigated the Makkan saying, *"Woe unto you! This is not our way of life; that is Muhammad's way of life."* After this incident the Leaders of the Quraysh in Dar An-Nadwah decided to put into motion steps to prevent Muhammad (saw) from continuing to expose their way of life. Another example of the effect of Da'wah involved Bilal when he embraced Islam. Umayyar Bin Khalaf made an agreement with Abdullah Bin Juda'm, a businessman, that if his sheep were tended to then he would be paid for this work and he would also be able to sell the sheeps' milk in the market for a small profit. Abdullah Bin Juda'm agreed to this and delegated responsibility of shepherding the herd to Bilal (ra), who was his servant.

Once, whilst Bilal (ra) was tending his sheep he saw Muhammad (saw) and Abu Bakr (ra) leaving a cave and as they passed by him Muhammad (saw) asked, *"O Shepherd, do you have any milk?"* Bilal (ra) replied, *"I do not have any (milk) except from one sheep and this is my provision for today; if you wish I can give it to you."* Bilal (ra) said this because the amount of milk the sheep had at that time was only sufficient for himself and it would normally take several months for sufficient milk to be produced to be sold in the market since vegetation was sparse.

Muhammad (saw) said, *"Bring it (the sheep) to us."* And he (saw) began to milk the sheep, collecting the milk in a large bowl. Muhammad (saw) then offered the milk to Bilal (ra) and Abu Bakr (ra) and drank some himself, until they all were full. The quantity of milk produced surprised Bilal (ra), as he knew there was only enough for one person. After they had drunk to their content, Muhammad (saw) invited Bilal to accept Islam. When Bilal (ra) professed his faith, as a precaution Muhammad (saw) said, *"Do not reveal your Islam to anyone. Leave now and when I tell you later, then reveal it."*

Bilal however, just could not hold back his belief and within three days revealed his Islam by going to the Ka'bah, where he condemned the idols of Quraysh and insulted those who sought intercession through them. He would proclaim, *"Woe unto you! Failed is the one who worships you."* He further infuriated the people by spitting on the Idols and then he proceeded to the market where he began to publicly condemn the economic system of the Quraysh in a similar vein to what Muhammad (saw) had said. Bilal (ra) called to the people, *"Do not buy by the stone as Muhammad (saw) has condemned it. Go and buy directly; the milk of Abdullah Bin Juda'm is of high quality."* Some of Mushriks⁵⁶ who heard this became convinced by what Bilal (ra) had said and went directly to Abdullah Bin Juda'm's stall to purchase milk.

The stallholder was unaware of what Bilal (ra) had declared and refused to sell to the people; instead insisting they abided by the law that they were accustomed to. An argument erupted between the Mushriks and the stallholder and fearing for his safety, Bilal (ra) fled to Abdullah Bin Juda'm's house where he met Abdullah who said to him, *"What happened to you?"* Bilal (ra) replied, *"I will tell you later."*

⁵⁶ *Mushriks* – (lit. the one who practices Shirk) those who worship more than one deity

When the news of the conflict spread in Makkah, Umayyar and Abu Jahl were amongst the Quraysh who went to the Marketplace to investigate. There they found the two men, Abdullah Bin Juda'm's employee and the purchaser still disputing. They said to them, *"Let us go to Abu Sufyan in Dar An-Nadwah (to settle this)"*. An emergency meeting was then convened in the Parliament to settle the matter.

On arriving at An-Nadwah the Mushrik who refused to pay for the milk was interrogated. He replied, *"This is not a good trading practice. It is a type of contract that causes friction between the people."* The Noblesmen from Quraysh then asked, *"And who taught you this?"* he replied, *"It is the word of Bilal."* Knowing that Bilal (ra) was only a servant, Umayyar arose and shouted out in anger, *"I am not going to wait til sunset (today) to finish with this man."*

Quraysh began to search for Bilal (ra) and eventually found him in Abdullah Bin Juda'm's house. They said to Abdullah, *"Have you become a fundamentalist?"* as he had provided refuge for Bilal (ra). He replied, *"Woe unto you! How can you accuse me of such? If I lie then I will slaughter 100 camels to Al-Lat and Al-Uzzah."* Quraysh continued, *"But your black man (slave) did such and such. Call him and see."* When they called Bilal (ra), the man who sought intercession from the idols recognised him and shouted, *"That is the man who attacked our belief!"* Bilal (ra) replied, *"Muhammad (saw) the good man said so."* Angered by the response, Umayyar and Abu Jahl asked Abu Sufyan, *"What are you going to do with him,"* he (Abu Sufyan) replied, *"We will deal with him and show our slaves what happens if they rebel."*

Bilal (ra) was then dragged, tortured and beaten solely because he forbade the evil in society. As a result of this incident, a law was passed declaring a general boycott of all the Muslims; superseding a previous law that stated each tribe should punish their own tribesmen if they were found to attack the customs and traditions of the Quraysh.

The Contract of the Stone

During the time of Jahiliyyah, the throwing of a stone was a form of transaction, which involved the customer purchasing a rock of a fixed value. The stone would be thrown across a distance in the direction of objects with varying prices; some having a greater value and others a lesser value than the price paid for the stone. The aim of the transaction was that the customer would either strike a desired object or land the stone in a circle demarcating the goods. If the stone were to land outside this area the client would automatically forfeit his money. This form of transaction was one that the Quraysh had employed without thought or question for many generations. When they heard Muhammad (saw) and then Bilal (ra) attacking this in addition to their idols, they were truly enraged. Furthermore, they saw how the Makkan people were now referring to Muhammad (saw) and what he (saw) would say, so much so that it would cause disputes between those who did not even believe in Muhammad (saw).

Exposing other aspects of the Economic System

On another occasion in the marketplace, a businessman wanted to sell his pregnant she-camel for the price of five. He said to the customer, *"This camel is worth five camels as it is pregnant with another five."* The non-Muslim man replied, *"Until the baby camels have been delivered, I can not pay this amount."* Even though the buyer was not Muslim, he still refused to buy the camel since he saw the error in the transaction and he used Muhammad (saw) as his reference since Muhammad (saw) had said, *"It (that form of transaction) is not good."*

The non-Muslims in Makkah were beginning to adopt the practice of Muhammad (saw) and in their disputes they would refer to him (saw) and to what Islam commanded on the matter. This only occurred because Muhammad (saw) publicly attacked the Qurayshi way of life by commanding good and forbidding evil. Whenever he addressed the evil in society he would first expose it and then bring the solution in

accordance to Islam, linking all matters to Tawheed, the belief in One God.

Addressing the Social System

Exposing the corruption of Quraysh was not restricted solely to the economic system, but instead addressed all aspects of life. In regard to the social system, two issues that were prevalent during the Jahiliyyah period were the burying of the newborn daughters alive as well as rampant illegal acts of fornication.

Burying Daughters

At that time, it was an inherent part of Arab culture to abort the female children soon after delivery. The Arabs were proud of this tradition so much so that they would often write pages of poetry regarding it. Allah (swt) revealed about this,

وَإِذَا الْمَوْؤُودَةُ سُئِلَتْ بِأَيِّ ذَنْبٍ قُتِلَتْ

“And when the female (infant) buried alive (as the pagan Arabs used to do) shall be questioned: For what sin was she killed?”⁵⁷

Muhammad (saw) would recite the above ayah, exposing and ridiculing this action and would often ask, “*Why do you bury your own daughters alive? Do not kill your babies in fear of poverty. Allah (swt) provides for both you and them.*”

Fornication

The Arabs were extremely proud of their social system especially their freedom to fornicate freely without fear of any recourse. In response Muhammad (saw) recited what Allah (swt) had revealed on the matter,

وَلَا تَقْرُبُوا الزِّنَىٰ إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا

“And come not near to unlawful sexual intercourse. Verily, it is Fahishah (i.e. anything that transgresses its limits), and an evil way (that leads one to Hell unless Allah forgives him).”⁵⁸

When these statements were made, we have to bear in mind that the Arabs enjoined and enjoyed these actions, being part and parcel of their way of life in a similar way that we find today. When Muhammad (saw) began to put restrictions on alcohol consumption saying, *“Do not come to prayer when you are drunk”* he was effectively challenging the status quo in a hope that the people would realise their mistakes and would accept the Deen of Islam.

Addressing the Ritual System

Muhammad (saw) attacked Quraysh’s ritual system especially their blind faith in their idols,

إِنَّكُمْ وَمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ حَصَبُ جَهَنَّمَ أَنْتُمْ لَهَا وَارِدُونَ

“Certainly you (disbelievers) and that which you are worshipping now besides Allah, are (but) fuel for Hell! (Surely), you will enter it.”⁵⁹

When the following ayah were revealed to the Qurayshi pagans, some of them became delighted and would mockingly say, *“We are pleased to be with our gods in the Hellfire, as the idols will be with the idolaters (in the Hellfire), and therefore Isa (as), the son of Maryam will be with his worshippers (i.e. in the Hell-fire).”* In rebuttal to this, Allah (swt) revealed the following verse:

⁵⁷ Al-Qur’an – Surah At-Takwir, 81:8-9

⁵⁸ Al-Qur’an – Surah Al-Isra’, 17:32

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ سَبَقَتْ لَهُمْ مِنَّا الْحُسْنَىٰ أُولَٰئِكَ عَنْهَا مُبْعَدُونَ

“Verily, those for whom the good has preceded from Us, they will be removed far therefrom (Hell). (e.g. Isa, the son of Maryam, Uzair).”⁶⁰

Addressing the Rulers of Makkah

In addition to exposing the various laws and customs the pagan Arabs would enact and follow, Muhammad (saw) was also ordered to address the very leaders who were the law makers themselves enforcing and permitting the corruption that would be manifest in Arab society. As we have mentioned, the Arab noblesmen enjoyed an unrivalled status in Makkan society since they owned the majority of the wealth and neither their actions nor their decisions would or could be called to question. In this atmosphere of unaccountability, Allah (swt) sent numerous ayat addressing and exposing the evil and corruption of the various leaders of the Qurayshi authority.

Allah (swt) employed different means through the Qur’anic ayat in addressing the rulers of the various departments of Quraysh. Often He (swt) would name them by name, as in the case with Abu Lahab, *“Perish the Hands of Abu Lahab and perish he.”* On other occasions, Allah (swt) would provide detailed descriptions pinpointing the transgressing ruler as in the case of al-Aqnas bin Shuraaq and al-Waleed Ibn Al-Mughirah.

أَرَأَيْتَ إِنْ كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ ۖ أَلَمْ يَعْلَمِ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَرَىٰ ۖ كَلَّا لَئِنْ لَّمْ يَنْتَهِ لَنَسْفَعًا
بِالنَّاصِيَةِ ۖ نَاصِيَةٍ كَاذِبَةٍ خَاطِئَةٍ ۖ فَلْيَدْعُ نَادِيَهُ ۖ سَنَدْعُ الزَّبَانِيَةَ

⁵⁹ Al-Qur’an – Surah Al-Anbiya’, 21:98

⁶⁰ Al-Qur’an – Surah Al-Anbiya’, 21:101

“Tell me if he denies (the truth, i.e. this Qur’ an) and turns away? Knows he not that Allah does see (what he does)? Nay! If he ceases not, We will catch him by the forelock. A lying, sinful forelock! Then let him call upon his council (of helpers). We will call out the guards of Hell (to deal with him)! Nay! (O Muhammad) Do not obey him. Fall prostrate and draw near to Allah!”⁶¹

The above ayah was revealed addressing al-Aqnas Bin Shuraaq who would ridicule the Islamic way of life, and would threaten Muhammad (saw). Despite these threats, Muhammad (saw) continuously ignored him, and it is reported by Ibn Hisham that whenever Muhammad (saw) prayed, al-Aqnas and Abu Lahab would ridicule him and pour rubbish over him, which would often include camel’s entrails.

وَلَكِنْ كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّى
وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ الْاٰهْلُ يَتَمَطَّى
اَوْ لَىٰ لَكَ فَاُولٰٓئِیْ
اَوْ لَىٰ لَكَ فَاُولٰٓئِیْ

“But on the contrary, he belied (this Qur’ an and the message of Muhammad (saw)) and turned away! Then he walked in conceit (full of pride) to his family admiring himself! Woe to you [O man (disbeliever)]! And then (again) woe to you! Again, woe to you [O man (disbeliever)]! And then (again) woe to you!”⁶²

The above ayat are describing Abu Lahab and Abu Jahl and how they did not believe in Islam. They would often walk around in arrogance amongst their own people proclaiming their disbelief by saying, ‘I do not believe in Muhammad’.

⁶¹ Al-Qur’an – Surah Al-’Alaq, 96:13-18

⁶² Al-Qur’an – Surah Al-Qiyamah, 75:32-35

Allah (swt) therefore sent a warning to them that because of their actions they were promised Hell-fire, whilst at the same time reassuring Muhammad (saw) not to be disheartened by them and to continue worshipping Allah (swt) by submitting to Him alone. When Muhammad (saw) began to recite these verses in public, he represented a political threat to Quraysh since he now began to throw insults undermining the authority and power that these leaders had held in their grip without question.

Often Allah (swt) would speak about those in authority together saying,

فَمَا لَهُمْ عَنِ التَّذْكَرَةِ مُعْرِضِينَ يٰ كَاٰنَهُمْ حُمْرٌ مُّسْتَنْفِرَةٌ يّٰ فَرَّتْ مِنْ قَسْوَرَةٍ

*"Then what is wrong with them (the disbelievers) that they turn away from (receiving) caution (from Muhammad)? As if they were (frightened) wild donkeys. Fleeing from a hunter, or a lion, or a beast of prey."*⁶³

The above ayah describes the situation whenever Muhammad (saw) would enter into the presence of the Qurayshi noblemen to warn them about their deeds, they would desert and flee from his presence like insane people running away from the truth.

For al-Waleed Ibn Mughirah, the head poet of Makkah and the chief of Bani Makhsum, Allah (swt) sent a barrage of verses exposing him to be a liar, a slanderer and of being no worth. However, the greatest insult of all was the declaration that he himself (al-Waleed) was of illegitimate birth.

⁶³ Al-Qur'an – Surah Al-Muddaththir, 74:49-51

وَلَا تُطِيعُ كُلَّ حَلَّافٍ مَّهِينٍ ۚ هَمَّازٍ مَّشْتَاءٍ بَنَمِيمٍ ۚ مَنَاعٍ لِلْخَيْرِ مُعْتَدٍ أَثِيمٍ ۚ
عُتْلٌ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ رَنِيمٍ ۚ أَنْ كَانَ ذَا مَالٍ وَبَنِينَ ۚ إِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِ آيَاتُنَا قَالَ
أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ۚ سَنَسِفُهُ عَلَى الْخُرُطُومِ

“And (O Muhammad) obey you not everyone Hallaf Mahin (the one who swears much and is a liar or is worthless). A slanderer, going about with calumnies, the Hinderer of good, the transgressor, the one who sins, the one who is cruel, and moreover base-born (of illegitimate birth). When Our Verses (of the Qur’an) are recited to him, he says: ‘Tales of the men of old!’ We shall brand him on the snout (nose)!”⁶⁴

Al-Waleed Ibn Mughirah was so enraged with this accusation that he immediately drew his sword and went to his maternal house saying to his own mother, “Who is my father? Muhammad (saw) never lies.” Upon being told that he was of illegitimate birth, al-Waleed said to the people, “Muhammad has killed me! He has left nothing unexposed!” Even though this detailed information was revelation from Allah (swt), it illustrates to us how Muhammad (saw) would publicly address and even expose those in authority since they did not implement Islam, but rather implemented Kufr (disbelief) and corruption.

Rulers Past and Present

We have seen from the above explicit ayat of the Qur’an how Muhammad (saw) would address all aspects of the society he was living in. Whether that be the economic, the social, the ritual or even the political aspects of it. We have seen how he (saw) exposed the corrupt attributes of those who held the steeds of the political reigns in Makkan society, undermining both their effectiveness as rulers as well

⁶⁴ Al-Qur’an – Surah Al-Qalam, 68:10-16

as their legitimacy in the eyes of the people. Allah (swt) has ordered us in the Qur'an to follow Muhammad (saw) as our example saying,

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ
وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

*"Indeed for you in the Messenger of Allah is the Only
Example"*⁶⁵

And thus it is incumbent upon us as Muslims to emulate him (saw) in all his (saw) actions including addressing the Kufr of the society that we live in, as well as exposing the one who legislates and decrees this Kufr to be permissible in the law.

The leaders of any society, far from maintaining a status like any other ordinary citizen, carry upon their shoulders the responsibility of the entire nation. And as a result they can lead to the guidance or even the misguidance of the people. Allah (swt) says,

وَإِذَا أَرَدْنَا أَنْ نُهْلِكَ قَرْيَةً أَمَرْنَا مُتْرَفِيهَا فَفَسَقُوا فِيهَا فَحَقَّ عَلَيْهَا الْقَوْلُ
فدَمَّرْنَاهَا تَدْمِيرًا ۖ وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِنَ الْقُرُونِ مِنْ بَعْدِ نُوحٍ وَكَفَىٰ بِرَبِّكَ بِذُنُوبِ
عِبَادِهِ خَبِيرًا بَصِيرًا

*"And when We decide to destroy a town (society), We (first)
send a definite order (to obey Allah) to those among them
who lead a life of luxury (the leaders). Then, they transgress
therein, and thus the word (of torment) is justified against it
(them). Then We destroy it with complete destruction. And
how many generations have We destroyed after Nuh! And*

⁶⁵ Al-Qur'an – Surah Al-Ahzaab, 33:21

***Sufficient is your Lord as an All-Knower and All-Beholder of
the sins of His slaves.”⁶⁶***

In this ayah, Allah (swt) has promised destruction for those that transgress the Laws of Allah (swt) by not obeying them, nor by implementing them.

However, what becomes of the people if the leader is manifestly wrong and corrupted and the people do not resist him, but rather follow him in his corruption and Kufr? Allah (swt) says,

وَيَوْمَ يَعَضُّ الظَّالِمُ عَلَى يَدَيْهِ يَقُولُ يَا لَيْتَنِي اتَّخَذْتُ مَعَ الرَّسُولِ سَبِيلًا يَا
وَيْلَتَى لَيْتَنِي لَمْ أَتَّخِذْ فُلَانًا خَلِيلًا يَا لَقَدْ أَضَلَّنِي عَنِ الذِّكْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ جَاءَنِي
وَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِلْإِنْسَانِ خَذُولًا وَيَا رَّبِّ إِنِّي قَوْمِي اتَّخَذُوا هَذَا
الْقُرْآنَ مَهْجُورًا

***“And (remember) the Day when the Zalim (the oppressor) will
bite at his hands, he will say: ‘O! Would that I had taken a
path with the Messenger (Muhammad). Ah! Woe to me!
Would that I had never taken so and so (the Rulers) as a
Khalil (an intimate friend)! He indeed led me astray from the
Reminder (this Qur’an) after it had come to me. And Shaitan
(Satan) is to man ever a deserter in the hour of need.’ And the
Messenger (Muhammad) will say ‘O my Lord! Verily, my
people deserted this Qur’an (neither listened to it, nor acted
on its Laws and teachings).”⁶⁷***

Allah (swt) has promised on the Day of Judgement how those who followed the corrupted, tyrant rulers will curse them and attempt to

⁶⁶ Al-Qur’an – Surah Al-Isra’, 17:16-17

⁶⁷ Al-Qur’an – Surah Al-Furqaan, 25:27-30

disassociate themselves from them because of the mistake they did in following them instead of the teachings and Laws of the Qur'an.

However, at that time it will be too late to ask for forgiveness, and so they will ask Allah (swt) to punish their leaders with a torment twice of that they themselves will receive.

وَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّا أَطَعْنَا سَادَتَنَا وَكُبَرَاءَنَا فَأَضَلُّونَا السَّبِيلَا يَا رَبَّنَا آتِهِمْ ضِعْفَيْنِ مِنَ
الْعَذَابِ وَالْعَنُتُمْ لَعْنَا كَبِيرَا

"And they will say: "Our Lord! Verily, we followed our leaders and our Great ones (noble people), and they misguided us from the (Right) Way. Our Lord! Give them double the torment and curse them with a mighty curse!"⁶⁸

Allah (swt) also says in the Qur'an,

إِذْ تَبَرَّأَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا مِنَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا وَرَأَوْا الْعَذَابَ وَتَقَطَّعَتْ بِهِمُ الْأَسْبَابُ
وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا لَوْ أَنَّا كَرَّرْنَا فَتَنَّا مِنْهُمْ كَمَا تَبَرَّأُوا مِنَّا كَذَلِكَ يُرِيهِمُ اللَّهُ
أَعْمَالَهُمْ حَسَرَاتٍ عَلَيْهِمْ وَمَا هُمْ بِخَارِجِينَ مِنَ النَّارِ

"When those who were followed (leaders) disown those who followed them (people), and they see the torment, then all their relations will be cut off from them. And those who followed will say: 'If only we had one more chance to return (to the worldly life), we would disown (declare ourselves as innocent from) them (Rulers) as they have disowned us.' Thus Allah will show them their deeds as regrets for them. And they will never get out of the Fire."⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Al-Qur'an – Surah Al-Ahzab, 33:67-8

⁶⁹ Al-Qur'an – Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:166-7

Allah (swt) is again making a distinction between two entities, the leaders and the masses that follow them, and He (swt) explains the punishment for both of them. He (swt) makes this distinction since both are dissimilar to one another and both have different roles to play in society. For this reason society is defined by the 'Ulema as *'the continuous transactions between the people (masses) managed by an authority.'*

From the above verses it is clear that if the authority becomes corrupt then in turn the masses will follow since they abide by those who are in charge over them. However, by the same token if the authority implements Islam then the masses, Muslims and non-Muslims, will by default tend towards Islam. The analogy that can be drawn is that the Rulers represent a Captain of a ship while the masses of society represent the rest of the sailors. The sailors of the ship abide with and follow whatever their Captain requests, so if he demands to sail into a dark storm then the rest of the sailors will blindly follow. Because of the actions of the Captain the rest of the sailors will subsequently suffer as they consent to the legitimacy of his authority. Therefore using this principle, the way to change the thoughts and ideas of a society, to that of Islam, is to transform the person in authority or the people who represent power such as the military, so that they implement the Shari'ah and in turn the rest of society can thus benefit from this creed.

It is clear from this example that the leaders play an important role in society and therefore it is required for them to be accounted otherwise they will lead the masses astray. In Islam, we have seen how Allah (swt) addresses this issue by asking the people either to expose or account their leaders. This is in order to make them realise that unless they implement Islam they will be removed from authority. A natural consequence of ceasing to account the legitimate rulers and the mistakes that they make, is that they will eventually become corrupted by the power and the position that they enjoy.

By not exposing the leaders when they implement other than Islam and bring oppression to the people is in fact consent to their actions and an ignorance of their evil, making us similar to them. Moreover Allah (swt) curses the one who consents to this evil by blindly following those without authority without questioning whether that which he implements is from Allah (swt) or not, as He (swt) mentions in the Qur'an,

بَلْ قَالُوا إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا عَلَىٰ أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِم مُّهُتَدُونَ ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ مَا
أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ فِي قَرْيَةٍ مِّن نَّذِيرٍ إِلَّا قَالَ مُتْرَفُوهَا إِنَّا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا عَلَىٰ أُمَّةٍ
وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِم مُّقْتَدُونَ

“Nay! They (people) say: ‘We found our fathers following a certain way and religion, and we guide ourselves by their footsteps.’ And similarly, we sent not a warner before you (O Muhammad (saw)) to any town (people) but to the luxurious ones (Leaders) among them (who) said: ‘We found our fathers following a certain way and religion, and we will indeed follow their footsteps.’ (The warner) said, ‘Even if I bring you better guidance than that which you found your fathers following? They said, ‘Verily, we disbelieve in that with which you have been sent.’”⁷⁰

The responsibilities of the Muslims are once again described in the following Hadith. Imaam At-Tabarani⁷¹ reported on the authority of Mua'dh bin Jabal, that Muhammad (saw) said, “Verily the Reha [Grinder] of Islam will continue to grind, so move (continue) with it all the time [do not ever leave Islam]. Verily the Qur'an and the authority (of Islam) will be separated from each other, do not leave the Qur'an. There will be rulers

⁷⁰ Al-Qur'an – Surah Al-Zukhruf, 43:22-23

⁷¹ Hadith mentioned by Abu Na'eem in his book Dalal al Nabuwa as well as in Al-Mu'jiza as-Sageer, Vol 2; pg 42 Hadith No. 749

amongst you, if you obey them they will come and oppress you and dominate over you, and if you disobey them then they will kill you."

The Sahabah asked Muhammad (saw), "O Prophet of Allah (saw) what should we do (at that time)?" He said, "Do what the people of Isa Ibn Maryam did, they had been cut by the sword and had been crucified on wood. Verily to die obeying Allah (swt) [by resisting them] is better than to live and disobey Allah (swt)."

Another version of the hadith recorded in Dalal an-Nabuwa adds further, "By the One who has Muhammad's (saw) soul in his hand! To die for the sake of Allah (swt) [resisting them] is better for him than to live in disobedience."

Some may try and argue that we are incapable of rising to change our situation and therefore the best option is to remain quiet. However, to remain silent is not an option Allah (swt) has given us. As is reported in Ibn Hibban that the Messenger Muhammad (saw) said, "If anyone of you sees an aggressive oppressive ruler who makes the unlawful lawful, who dishonours Allah's Rights, who governs over people not by what Allah (swt) has revealed without rising against him with a word or action, Allah (swt) will punish him with the oppressor". Another Hadith recorded in Al-Mu'jam al-Kabeer of At-Tabarani states, "The one who is silent about the Haqq (rights) is a mute Shaytaan."

These unambiguous ahadith echo the same message; that we should neither accept nor obey the rulers over us who do not implement the Shari'ah even if this means that they want to kill us as "...dying and obeying Allah (swt) [by resisting them] is better than to live disobeying Allah (swt)." In this example, instead of asking the Muslims to run away from the tyranny or remain silent, Muhammad (saw) asked the Muslims to follow the example of the 'People of Isa.' What the people of Isa (as) did was to stand against their oppressive leaders and were subsequently

tortured to death one by one for their efforts. Surely this sacrifice is better for us than to disobey Allah (swt) by obeying and supporting the tyrant rulers?

Quraysh Decide on How to React

The Makkan society was shocked at the actions of Muhammad (saw) and began to publicly condemn his activities. They felt stunned and insulted whenever they heard the Muslims proclaiming the guidance of Islam and then denouncing the Qurayshi misguidance. The Quraysh decided that they had to do something to try and limit the uprising since it was directly affecting their way of life. But what actions could they undertake for someone who was always known as the trustworthy and truthful? The one who carried the highest values of morality and the one they knew had no equivalent in the entire world, let alone in the Arabian Peninsula.

The Election of Utba' Bin Rabiya'

The Quraysh gathered together and began to look for the most qualified person amongst them in magic, fortune telling and poetry to challenge Muhammad (saw). They said, *"Muhammad (saw) divides our society and community and has fragmented our affairs and ridiculed our religion. Let this man speak with Muhammad (saw) and we will see his reply."* From amongst them they chose Utba' Bin Rabiya' believing him to be the most qualified in these qualities. They said, *"O Utba'! (Abi Waleed) Go and speak with this man."*

He (Utba') went to see Muhammad (saw) and said, *"O Muhammad! Who is better? You or Abdullah, your father?"* He (saw) remained silent. He (Utba') then said, *"Are you better or your grandfather Abdul Muttalib?"* He (saw) again remained silent. Utba' carried on, *"If you think that these people are better than yourself, then these people worshipped the gods that you ridicule. If you think that you are better than them, speak out so that we can*

hear you. By God, we never saw any situation that angered your people before yourself. You have divided our community, you have fragmented our affairs, you have ridiculed our Deen and you have exposed us in front of all the Arabs until some have said that there is a magician amongst the Quraysh and others say there is a fortune-teller amongst them. There is nothing left except for us to rise and fight each other (leading to much bloodshed).

"If what you are doing is a matter of need for money, we will collect for you money until we make you the richest from amongst us. However, if what happened to you is a desire to get married, choose which women from the Quraysh is the most attractive to you. We are willing to marry you to ten of them. If what has happened to you is a matter of illness and sickness we will bring you the best doctors to treat you and if you need to be a leading figure, someone with responsibility and authority, we are willing to give you an appointment to such a status."

The Prophet replied, *"Have you finished?"* He replied, *"Yes."* He (saw) began to recite, *"Ha Meem"*. And read the whole chapter until he reached the Ayah,

فَإِنْ أَعْرَضُوا فَقُلْ أَنْذَرْتُكُمْ صَاعِقَةً مِثْلَ صَاعِقَةِ عَادٍ وَثَمُودَ

"But if they turn away then say, (O Muhammad), 'I have warned you of a Sa'iqah (torment, destruction, thunder-bolt) like the Sa'iqah which overtook 'Ad and Thamud (people).'"⁷²

Utba' said, *"Stop! Enough! Do you not have anything besides that?"* The Prophet (saw) replied, *"No"*. Utba' returned to the Quraysh and they asked him *"What news do you have for us?"* He said, *"I never left anything I thought that you may ask or offer to him. I asked and offered him everything."* They said, *"Did he respond to you?"* He said, *"Yes! And by the idols I did not understand anything he said except when he said I am warning you about*

⁷² Al-Qur'an – Surah Ha-Meem, 41:13

thunder and lightening of the like that came to 'Ad and Thamud.' They said, *"Perish you! The man spoke to you in Arabic and you did not understand what he said?"* Utba' replied, *"By Allah, I did not understand anything except the thunder and lightening."*

The Quraysh Visit Abu Taalib

After much deliberation with Utba', the Quraysh realised that there were no other options left but to approach Muhammad's (saw) uncle Abu Taalib directly. They went to him hoping that he could stop the activities of his nephew.

A group of the Qurayshi nobles went to visit Abu Taalib and said to him, *"O Abu Taalib! Your nephew curses our idols. He insults our gods. He ridicules our Deen and our aspirations. He also claims that our fathers and mothers were misguided. Either stop him (yourself) or cease your protection of him so that we can deal with him ourselves. You are on the same Deen as us and you disagree with him the same way we differ with him. If you want us to deal with him, we can deal with him."* Abu Taalib said, *"Let me speak with him."*

He then went to speak with Muhammad (saw) and said, *"O my nephew! My people have come to see me. They are greatly hurt by the ridicule you level at their idols and religion and they asked me to speak with you. If you stop doing these insults, but stay with what you believe (i.e. remain a Muslim but do not attack the way of life of the Quraysh) there will be no problem."* He (saw) replied in full confidence, *"O my uncle! If they put the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left hand in order to leave what I am calling them to, I will never do so until Allah's Deen becomes prevalent or I die for it."* Abu Taalib returned to the Noblemen and answered them kindly and said, *"Leave the matter with me I will deal with it."* He said to Muhammad (saw), *"Carry on with what you believe. By God as long as I am alive I will let no harm come to you."*

The delegation of Utba' sent by the Quraysh showed how they wanted to silence Muhammad (saw) by offering temptations that would normally entice and lure any human being. But as Muhammad (saw) knew he was carrying the Truth and with absolute trust in Allah (swt), he waited patiently for revelation to arrive. The Quraysh were incensed and perplexed by Muhammad's (saw) response since it confused them. They believed that Muhammad (saw) was a shrewd individual seeking to unnerve the Quraysh by convincing some people that their way of life was flawed, so that perhaps he could barter with them for a better standing in their society. When Muhammad (saw) rejected all that they offered him, they realised that he (saw) posed a greater threat to them and their way of life than they had first imagined.

The revelation sent to Muhammad (saw) and his subsequent actions, show his (saw) refusal to compromise the Deen of Islam or to sell it for a small price. Allah's (swt) Deen is superior since it contains only the Haqq (absolute truth) as opposed to the Baatil that the Makkan society had to offer. Thus, any attempt to persuade Muhammad (saw) to make concessions or conciliate his way of life with that of the Quraysh faced immediate rejection from both Rasoolallah and Allah (swt).

When the Quraysh failed to convince the Prophet (saw) and his uncle using temptations and offerings in the form of money, wealth, status and women, they began to think about other means to prevent and disrupt his (saw's) Da'wah and the activity of his companions. The concern of the Quraysh now was with the open proclamation of the Da'wah and it being very near to the Hajj season. The Quraysh were aware that when the delegations from the Arab Tribes visited them for the Hajj, they would ask about the uprising, or if they did not know about Muhammad (saw), at the very least they would hear about him because of his (saw) activities.

The Quraysh Meet with Waleed Ibn Mughirah

The Quraysh convened a meeting in order to prevent the da'wah of Muhammad (saw) having any effect on the hearts of the pilgrims. It is reported that Abu Lahab, Abu Sufyan, Al-Waleed Ibn Mughirah with Wadul Harithi, Umayyah Khalaf, Waars Bin Wa'il and Muta'm Bin Wa'die gathered together to discuss what they should say to the Arab ambassadors regarding the situation. Waleed said, *"We should unite upon a single saying or else we will contradict one another and look like liars."* The Quraysh then said, *"If that is the case, you suggest what we should do and we will listen."* Waleed replied, *"No! You suggest (first) and I will listen."*

They began, *"We can say he is a Qoheen (fortune-teller)."* Waleed said, *"By God. He is not a fortune-teller. We have seen many fortune-tellers. They tell lies and Muhammad is the one who (always) tells the truth. The Qur'an he speaks is not the whisperings of the fortune-tellers nor is it (one) of their styles."* They then said, *"Let us call him Majnoon (insane)."* Waleed replied, *"He is not of the insane. We have seen the insane people. He does not have a variant mood, nor does he have any of the features that are characteristic of an insane person."* They said, *"We will therefore call him a poet."* Waleed said, *"No! He is not a poet. I have heard the words and the speeches of Ibn Abrus and Umayyah Ibn Abdu Salt; but the speech of Muhammad is not the same as the speech of these influential poets of Makkah. I know what poetry is. I know all its metaphors, tools, forms, grammar, explanations and rules and regulations, I know all the rules of poetry. What he says is not poetry."* They then said, *"We will say he is a magician."* He (Waleed) said, *"He is not a magician. We have seen the magicians and their magic. He does not blow on the knots, nor does he use slight of hand. By God, verily his speech is so beautiful and its root is so firm like the roots of palm trees. And its contents are so clear and succulent like the fruit. Whatever you will claim, your people will know what you claim to be false."*

Al-Waleed went back to his home and the people began to spread rumours saying that something had happened to him. Abu Jahl entered to Waleed's home and said, *"What has happened to you? The Quraysh came to you as the Master of the Language of Quraysh and they told you what they believed (about Muhammad) and you rejected them all. Now the people are saying that you have started to believe in him."*

Waleed replied, *"I did not do so; but I left them in order to think about the affair of Muhammad. And I have thought about it. What does the magician usually do? He separates the son from his father, separates brother from sister, separates husband from wife. We know from ourselves that we have lost some of our sons and they have started to believe in him. Some of us have lost their brothers and sisters (by embracing Islam) and look at what happened to Abu Bakr and Uthman and to the others. I think he is the Magician of Words of this age."* Abu Jahl said *"Verily you speak the truth! He is a magician"*.

After much discussion, they had finally agreed to declare that Muhammad (saw) practised *Sihir ul Bayaan* (the magic of words) to those he (saw) encountered. He could brainwash people and change their minds. They would warn the public to take care of their children and began to send their advisors all around the city of Makkah setting up checkpoints at the entrances. At these checkpoints, apart from giving general advice and guidelines to those entering for the Hajj season, they would also warn the pilgrims to avoid the activities of Muhammad (saw). Abu Lahab was chosen personally to spearhead this campaign.

It is noteworthy in this regard to say that Allah (swt) revealed sixteen verses referring to Al-Waleed and the cunning way he contemplated to manipulate the people expected to arrive in Makkah for pilgrimage. Allah (swt) says,

إِنَّهُ فَكَّرَ وَقَدَّرَ ۖ فَقَتَلَ كَيْفَ قَدَّرَ ۖ ثُمَّ قَتَلَ كَيْفَ قَدَّرَ ۖ ثُمَّ نَظَرَ ۖ ثُمَّ عَبَسَ
وَبَسَرَ ۖ ثُمَّ أَدْبَرَ ۖ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ ۖ فَقَالَ إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ يُؤْتَرُ ۖ إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا قَوْلُ
الْبَشَرِ

*“Verily, he thought and plotted; so let him be cursed! How he
plotted! And once more let him be cursed, how he plotted!
Then he thought; then he frowned and he looked in a bad
tempered way; then he turned back and was proud; then he
said: ‘This is nothing but magic from that of old; this is
nothing but the word of a human being!’”⁷³*

Abu Lahab’s Attack

Abu Lahab used to follow Muhammad (saw) everywhere he went as he (saw) and his companions used to meet people at different places. Abu Lahab would follow Muhammad (saw) and whenever he (saw) met someone, whether they were in the markets or the streets, calling them to Allah (swt), Abu Lahab would come and say, “Do not listen to him for he is a Sabi’ (fundamentalist) and a Khazab (liar), and has rejected the religion of his parents. As I am his uncle, I know him well.”

The plot of Abu Lahab and the noblemen against Muhammad (saw) and his companions to try and prevent people from listening to his (saw)’s call failed. Instead of preventing people from hearing about Muhammad (saw), they inadvertently publicised Muhammad’s (saw) call. This led to the Deen of Islam being talked about throughout the whole of the Arabian Peninsula.

⁷³ Al-Qur’an – Surah Al-Muddaththir, 74:18-25

The Hostile Reaction to the Call

The dramatic shift of the Da'wah from being personal to that of public and confrontational, led the Qurayshi authorities to rethink their strategy to combat the growing support for Muhammad (saw). We have already seen how they tried to discredit Muhammad (saw) by labelling him and his companion's as insane troublemakers. However, this plot, rather than driving people away from the call, made them more inquisitive as to what it was, until the whole of Makkah had heard that somebody was being spoken to from the Heavens. The Quraysh were incensed by the increasing awareness amongst the Arabs of Muhammad (saw) in Makkah. They intensified their campaign of propaganda and undertook new forms to try and subdue the Messenger Muhammad (saw) and his trustworthy companions.

Strategies Adopted by the Quraysh

When the Quraysh found that whatever they did nothing could turn Muhammad (saw) nor divert him from his call, they began to think about using other means to confront him. The means of direct discrimination and force would now be utilised to achieve their aims, manifesting itself in four ways;

Humiliation and Ridiculing

The Quraysh adopted, as they had before, a scheme of humiliation and ridiculing of the Prophet, his companions and the message they carried. They employed the poets of Makkah to construct poems and ballads that reviled the Messenger (saw). They spread this poetry throughout Makkah and the Arabian Peninsula acting in a similar vein as the news media do today spreading lies and falsifications about Islam and the

sincere Mujahideen and Da'ies. They hoped not only to prevent people from coming to listen to Muhammad (saw) but also to try and convince those that had accepted the Deen of Islam to leave it. They began to refer to Muhammad (saw) in their poetry as 'Al-Majnoon' the Madman, so much so that when people used to see Muhammad (saw) they would say, "Here comes Al-Majnoon!", "Al-Majnoon has left!" and "Al-Majnoon is sitting there!" Because of this, his (saw's) name in Makkah became synonymous with Al-Majnoon. Allah (swt) informs us about this,

وَقَالُوا يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِي نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الذِّكْرُ إِنَّكَ لَمَجْنُونٌ

*"And they say, 'O you (O Muhammad) to whom the Zikr (Qur'an) has been sent down! Verily you are a Madman.'"*⁷⁴

Allah (swt) revealed numerous Ayahs in response to this slander to comfort the Messenger and his companions;

ن وَالْقَلَمِ وَمَا يَسْطُرُونَ ۚ مَا أَنْتَ بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ بِمَجْنُونٍ ۚ وَإِنَّ لَكَ لَأَجْرًا غَيْرَ
مَمْنُونٍ ۚ وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ ۚ فَسَتُبْصِرُ وَيُبْصِرُونَ ۚ بِأَيِّكُمْ الْمَقْتُولُ

*"Nun. By the pen and what they (angels) write. You (O Muhammad) by the Grace of your Lord are not Mad. Verily for you will be the endless rewards. And verily you (O Muhammad) are on an exalted (standard of) character. You will see, and they will see, which of you is afflicted with madness."*⁷⁵

Not only did they slander Muhammad (saw) by calling him a madman they also claimed that he (saw) was poet, a liar and a fortune-teller.

⁷⁴ Al-Qur'an – Surah Al-Hijr, 15:6

⁷⁵ Al-Qur'an – Surah Al-Qalam, 68:1-6

وَيَقُولُونَ أَأَنْتَا لَتَارِكُوا آلِهَتَنَا لِشَاعِرٍ مَجْنُونٍ

*"And (they) said, 'Are we going to abandon our gods for the sake of a mad poet?' Nay he (Muhammad) has come with the truth and he confirms the messengers (before him). Verily you (pagans of Makkah) are going to taste a painful torment."*⁷⁶

فَذَكِّرْ فَمَا أَنْتَ بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ بِكَاهِنٍ وَلَا مَجْنُونٍ
يَمْ يَقُولُونَ شَاعِرٌ نَتَرَبَّصُ
بِهِ رَيْبَ الْمُنُونِ

*"Therefore remind (O Muhammad). By the Grace of Allah you are neither a fortune-teller nor a madman. Or do they say, '(Muhammad is) a poet! We await for him some calamity by time.'"*⁷⁷

وَعَجِبُوا أَنْ جَاءَهُمْ مُنْذِرٌ مِنْهُمْ وَقَالَ الْكَافِرُونَ هَذَا سَاحِرٌ كَذَّابٌ

*"And they (the Arab Pagans) wonder that a warner (Prophet Muhammad (saw)) has come to them from among themselves. And the disbelievers say, 'This (Prophet Muhammad (saw)) is a sorcerer, liar.'"*⁷⁸

Whenever they saw the Prophet (saw) they would whisper amongst themselves, "Here comes the Liar", "There sits the Liar" and "the Liar is speaking". Whenever any of the companions of the Prophet (saw) spoke about what he (saw) had conveyed to them i.e. gave Da'wah, they (the Quraysh) would say, "Do you recount to us what the Liar tells you?" In the same way that Muhammad (saw) became known throughout Makkah as being the Madman, he also came to be known as the Liar.

⁷⁶ Al-Qur'an – Surah As- Safaat, 37:36

⁷⁷ Al-Qur'an – Surah At-Tur, 52:29-30

⁷⁸ Al-Qur'an – Surah As- Saad, 38:4

This form of propaganda worked well and more and more people began to slander the Messenger of Allah (saw). People began to look down upon Muhammad (saw) and would feel hatred towards him. Allah (swt) says,

وَأِنْ يَكَادُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَيُزْلِقُونَكَ بِأَبْصَارِهِمْ لَمَّا سَمِعُوا الذِّكْرَ وَيَقُولُونَ إِنَّهُ لَمَجْنُونٌ

"The Kafirs look down to you by their own eyes when they hear the Zhikr (Qur'an) and they say, 'You are Majnoon'"⁷⁹

Whenever he (saw) sat with his companions, the majority of whom were either young or freed slaves, they would say to the people, "Look at who Muhammad (saw) sits with! All of them are youth and slaves! Verily we are the ones whom Allah has favoured!" They ridiculed him with these statements. Allah (swt) revealed in rebuttal,

وَكَذَلِكَ فَتَنَّا بَعْضَهُم بِبَعْضٍ لِّيَقُولُوا أَهَؤُلَاءِ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ بَيْنِنَا أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَعْلَمَ بِالشَّاكِرِينَ

"Thus we have tried some of them with others, that they might say, 'It is these (poor believers) whom Allah has favoured from amongst us?' Does not Allah know better those who are grateful?"⁸⁰

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ أَجْرَمُوا كَانُوا مِنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يَضْحَكُونَ وَإِذَا مَرُّوا بِهِمْ يَتَغَامَزُونَ
وَإِذَا انْقَلَبُوا إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِمْ انْقَلَبُوا فَكِهِينَ وَإِذَا رَأَوْهُمْ قَالُوا إِنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ لَضَالُّونَ

"And whenever they passed by them, they used to wink one to another (in mockery). And when they would return to their

⁷⁹ Al-Qur'an – Surah Al-Qalam, 68:51

*own people, they would return jesting; and when they saw them, they said 'Verily these have indeed gone astray.' But they (disbelievers) have not been sent as watchers over them (the Believers). But this day (Day of Judgement) those who believe will laugh at the disbelievers."*⁸¹

The suffering of the Prophet Muhammad (saw) was not something that was unique in history to him. Rather, the Messengers before him (saw) suffered in a similar fashion;

قَالُوا أَنْتُمْ لَكُمْ وَاتَّبَعَكَ الْأَرْذَلُونَ

*"They said, 'Are we to believe in you, O Nuh (as) and affirm what you call us to, when it is only the lowly people who follow you?'"*⁸²

Allah (swt) has informed us that Fir'aun said about Musa (as),

قَالَ إِنَّ رَسُولَكُمْ الَّذِي أُرْسِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ لَمَجْنُونٌ

*"Verily, Your Messenger who has been sent to you is a madman"*⁸³

Another example of this is mentioned in the Qur'an,

فَتَوَلَّى بُرْكَنَهُ وَقَالَ سَاحِرٌ أَوْ مَجْنُونٌ

*"But Fir'aun turned away (from Belief) along with his hosts, and said, 'A sorcerer, a madman (Musa)'"*⁸⁴

⁸⁰ Al-Qur'an – Surah Al-An'am, 6:53

⁸¹ Al-Qur'an – Surah Al-Mutaffifeen, 83:29-32

⁸² Al-Qur'an – Surah Ash-Shu'araa, 26:111

⁸³ Al-Qur'an – Surah Ash-Shu'araa, 26:27

⁸⁴ Al-Qur'an – Surah Ad-Dhariyat, 51:39

Distortion of the Qur'an

The second form of attack that the Quraysh utilised was to attack the message (Qur'an) directly. They tried to achieve this by distorting the verses revealed and spreading rumours about the authenticity of the Qur'an.

Again, the poets of Makkah were instrumental in spreading these slanders. They would include in their poetry verses saying that the Qur'an was fabricated, copied or even the work of a foreign man. This is described to us in the Qur'an,

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا إِفْكٌ افْتَرَاهُ وَأَعَانَهُ عَلَيْهِ قَوْمٌ آخَرُونَ فَقَدْ جَاءُوا
ظُلْمًا وَزُورًا ۚ وَقَالُوا أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ اكْتَتَبَهَا فَهِيَ تُمْلَى عَلَيْهِ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا

*"And those who disbelieve say 'This (Qur'an) is nothing but a lie that he (Muhammad) has invented, and others had helped him at it.' Infact they have produced an unjust thing and a lie and they say, 'Tales of the Ancient which he has written down: and they are dictated to him morning and afternoon.'"*⁸⁵

Muhammad (saw) often passed by the shop of a Christian youth known as Jabr, and would often say some kind words to him. The Quraysh took advantage of this and spread rumours suggesting that he (saw) would sit down with Jabr to write the Qur'an. Allah (swt) revealed,

وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّمَا يُعَلِّمُهُ بَشَرٌ لِّسَانُ الَّذِي يُلْحِدُونَ إِلَيْهِ أَعْجَمِي
وَهَذَا لِسَانٌ عَرَبِيٌّ مُبِينٌ

"And indeed we know that they (Pagans) say, 'It is only a human being who teaches him (Muhammad)'. The tongue of

*the man they refer to is foreign, whilst this (the Qur'an) is in a clear Arabic tongue."*⁸⁶

These ayat came as a shock to the Quraysh since they were claiming that someone who was foreign, whose mother tongue was not even Arabic, wrote the pure and unadulterated words of the Qur'an. As Allah (swt) had challenged the whole of mankind to produce a Chapter similar, and they themselves were unable to do so, despite their prowess in the Arabic language, credibility in their slander began to diminish since the falsehood in what they were claiming was becoming more and more evident.

Having failed in these lies, the Quraysh tried to trivialise the Qur'an by attacking the Message bearer i.e. Muhammad (saw) himself saying,

وَقَالُوا مَالِ هَذَا الرَّسُولِ يَأْكُلُ الطَّعَامَ وَيَمْشِي فِي الْأَسْوَاقِ لَوْلَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مَلَكٌ
فَيَكُونُ مَعَهُ نَذِيرًا ۚ أَوْ يُلْقَى إِلَيْهِ كِتَابٌ أَوْ تَكُونَ لَهُ جَنَّةٌ يَأْكُلُ مِنْهَا وَقَالَ
الظَّالِمُونَ إِن تَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا رَجُلًا مَسْحُورًا

*“Why does this Messenger (Muhammad (saw)) eat food, and walk about in the markets (as we do). Why is not an angel sent down to him to be a warner with him? Or (why) has not a treasure been granted to him, or why has not a garden whereof he may eat?’ And the Zalimun (Pagans) say, ‘You follow none but a man bewitched.’”*⁸⁷

Claiming Muhammad to be a Storyteller

In an attempt to minimise the impact the Message of the Qur'an had on people's hearts, the poets began to produce poetry containing stories

⁸⁵ Al-Qur'an – Surah Al-Furqaan, 25:4-5

⁸⁶ Al-Qur'an – Surah An-Nahl, 16:103

⁸⁷ Al-Qur'an – Surah Al-Furqaan, 25:7-8

and narrations similar to those mentioned in the Qur'an. This was in an attempt to show the masses that the Qur'an was not unique; rather it was only a storybook consisting of tales of the ancients.

Al-Nadr Bin Harith, who was one of the most prestigious poets of Makkah and was considered second in charge of the Media department after Waleed Ibn Mughirah, said to the Quraysh, *"O Quraysh! I know what has befallen you. I know that you are in a difficult position since Muhammad was from amongst you and has grown up with you. He was the most truthful and the most honest and sincere person from amongst you. So now, when you see that he has white hairs on his head as he becomes old, and he brings to you the Qur'an, you say he is a magician. By God! You know he is not a magician because we have seen the magicians, and you said he is a fortuneteller, and we know the fortunetellers. He is not a fortuneteller, as he does not have the same style as they do. You said he is a Shahir (poet) and we know he not a poet as we have seen and heard the poets and we know everything about poetry. And you said he is Majnoon! We know he is not Majnoon, as we know the actions of the Majnoon. I suggest that instead of using these we say Muhammad is a very good storyteller. He tells you all that has happened in the past and I, myself, can do the same!"*

Al-Nadr Ibn Harith departed and began to study history, religion, and theories of good and evil at Al-Hirah. He then studied the stories of the Kings of Persia and he took the sayings of Rosthum Asfandar, who was one of the great historians of that time. From him he learnt the stories of the ancients that were mentioned in the Qur'an.

Muhammad (saw) would often go and hold circles reminding the people of Allah (swt) and warning them about His Anger by recounting the stories of the civilisations before as examples of Allah's punishment. Al-Nadr would sit after Muhammad (saw) had given his talk and would convene a similar assembly, but would add to it some of the stories he had learnt from the Persian people and Rosthum Asfandar in

particular. He would then turn to his audience and say, "By God! What does Muhammad say that makes him a better storyteller than I? Does he not talk about the tales of the ancients as I do?"

On other occasions, Al-Nadr would bring a group of young women singers carrying musical instruments to his lectures. He would make the singers sing, and play the harp, whilst he delivered his talk, turning once again to his audience asking, "Who is better Muhammad or I?"

Not only did Al-Nadr try and stop people collectively from listening to Muhammad (saw), he would also look for individuals whom he felt were inclined to his (saw) teachings. To these people, he would send one of his performers to feed, sing as well as to play the harp for them until they no longer had any inclination towards Islam. Whilst his singer was performing, Al-Nadr would approach the individual concerned and recite and distort some of the Quranic verses, claiming that Muhammad (saw) had brought them.

Allah (swt) revealed in reply to this;

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَشْتَرِي لَهْوَ الْحَدِيثِ لِيُضِلَّ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَيَتَّخِذَهَا
هُزُوًا أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ

"And of mankind is he who purchases idle-talk (music and singing) to mislead (men) from the Path of Allah without knowledge, and takes it (the Qur'an) by way of mockery. For such there will be a humiliating torment (in hell-fire)"⁸⁸

The Offering of Compromise and Power

The Quraysh, having exhausted all manners of slander, backbiting, ridiculing and humiliation of the Prophet (saw), his companions and

⁸⁸ Al-Qur'an – Surah Luqmaan, 31:6

the Qur'an, felt that their campaign was still not very effective as people still lent their ear to Muhammad (saw). Those who had joined him from amongst themselves could not be convinced to return to their old ways and more and more people spoke about Muhammad (saw) and his activities. The Quraysh had to put an immediate end to this. Since the founding principal of the Quraysh established by Quayss Ibn Kilab was that of a Federation between different tribes based on conciliation to form a government, they felt similarly that they could reach a compromise with Muhammad (saw) coming to a middle ground between what Islam called for and what they called for.

The Quraysh believed that by calling for integration between the two Deens and common values, they would be able to suppress and contain the call of Islam. They felt that Muhammad (saw), in exchange for power, would leave aside some of the harsher and more direct verses of the Qur'an which addressed them and their way of life. In exchange for this, the Quraysh would leave aspects of their belief that conflicted directly with what Muhammad (saw) preached. Allah (swt) revealed the following verses condemning this offer saying,

وَدُّوا لَوْ تُدْهِنُ فَيُدْهِنُونَ يَا وَلَا تُطِيعُ كُلَّ حَلَّافٍ مَّهِينٍ

"They wish that you should compromise (in Deen) with them; so they (too) would compromise with you. And (O Muhammad) obey you not everyone Hallaf Mahin (the liar, the worthless)"⁸⁹

Upon hearing this, the Mushriks realised that Muhammad (saw) would not compromise nor forsake one iota of his Deen. They felt that instead of seeking a confederation of both Deens, they could accept for Muhammad's (saw) Deen to be implemented for one year and then their Deen for the next. They came with this offer to Muhammad (saw)

saying, "What about if you worship our gods for one year and we submit and worship your God for one year."

It is reported that four senior representatives from the Quraysh, Al-Asnad Bin Muttalib, Al Waleed Bin Mughirah, Umayyah Khallaf and Al-Asse Bin Wa'el Bin Asseherme, said to Muhammad (saw) "We will share the power in Parliament together. If what you follow is better, we will enjoy taking our share from it, and if what we follow is better then you will enjoy your good share from it."

In reply to this Allah (swt) revealed an entire Surah,

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ لَا أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ وَلَا
أَنَا عَابِدٌ مَا عَبَدْتُمْ وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ

"Say (O Muhammad): 'O Al-Kaafioun (disbelievers)! I do not worship that what you worship. Nor do you worship that which I worship. And I shall not worship that which you are worshipping. Nor will you worship that which I worship. To you be your Deen and to me my Deen (way of life).'"⁹⁰

It has been reported by the Fuqaha, that Surah Al-Kaafioun (the above Surah) was revealed instantly to Muhammad (saw) without any pause or hesitation. This emphasises the decisive nature of the response, removing any doubt or inclination to such an offer. Allah (swt) had now forever made Haraam (forbidden) any type of negotiation between the Muslims and the Kuffar that involved compromising on the basis of the Deen.

⁸⁹ Al-Qur'an – Surah Al-Qalam, 68:9-10

⁹⁰ Al-Qur'an – Surah Al-Kaafioun, 109:1-6

It is quite clear from the above narrations that some Muslims today are committing a grievous error and sin by accepting to share power, cooperating with non-Muslim governments and organisations. We have seen how the same offer was made to our beloved Prophet Muhammad (saw) and how Allah (swt) instantly rejected this, revealing the ayat of Al-Kaafiroun. The answer of the Prophet (saw) was entirely based on revelation and were not the opinion or comments of his own, devoid of guidance, rather everything he did was based on Allah's (swt) revelation. The statement of *"To you be your Deen and to me my Deen"* left the Quraysh angry, bewildered and speechless as they did not know how to respond.

Muhammad (saw) had a lot to gain in terms of power and influence if he cooperated with the Quraysh. He would have at least been able to end the enduring slander, abuse and suffering that he and his companions experienced. At most he would have been able to gain the ability to preach his Deen freely and without distortion. He could have influenced vast scores of peoples and tribes with his newfound position. But instead of submitting to the call of the Quraysh and that of the limited human intellect, he sacrificed and submitted to the Will of Allah (swt) keeping the Deen of Islam pure from any of the potential political influences the Quraysh could have wielded over it.

The Quraysh, realising that Muhammad (saw) had rejected all that they had to offer and had endured all the slander and mockery they had subjected him to, now had no choice but to act harshly and physically towards Muhammad (saw). They agreed to meet together and discuss how to go about implementing this new tactic.

The Quraysh Decide on a Physical Approach

Twenty-five of the most senior noblesmen of the Quraysh formed a committee, with Abu Lahab as convenor, to agree upon how to react against the Prophet (saw) and his companions. After much deliberation,

it was concluded that a more physical approach needed be adopted to stop the da'wah. They decided to fight directly against Islam and the Muslims by all the means they had at their disposal. They took action to arrest and interrogate those who were Muslim and had neither protection nor allegiance to any tribe, and torture them until they publicly denounced and rejected Islam.

The noblemen passed a law for the immediate arrest of anyone who was known to be Muslim, and for them to be humiliated and punished. The committee felt that Quraysh's national security was now being put at risk since Islam was now a threat to their very belief. By passing these laws, they felt they could scare people into not speaking with Muhammad (saw), by way of fear at being looked down upon by society or being arrested by the Quraysh. They also believed that the Muslims would leave their belief in fear of being tortured or killed.

The decision taken by the Quraysh was easy to enforce since the majority of the Muslims were weak and powerless with no resources nor any financial strength; rather, they predominantly consisted of young people and servants. This made them an easy target for the new governmental policy. The Quraysh on the other hand found it more difficult to impose these regulations on Muhammad (saw) as he had a unique personality, a noble lineage and was still well respected by some of the Arabs.

Abu Lahab's Persecution

Abu Lahab was chosen again to lead this new campaign against the Muslims as he had already gained much notoriety for his public and vehement rejection of Muhammad (saw). During the early stages of the revelation Abu Lahab was still the father-in-law of the daughters of Muhammad (saw), as his two sons Utbah and Udayyah had been married to Rukayah and Umm Al-Khulthum respectively, before he (saw) received revelation. In order for Abu Lahab to inflict as much

harm to Muhammad (saw) as possible he ordered his two sons to divorce the Prophet's daughters. This was done as they were dragged by their hair through the streets of Makkah and then thrown outside the door of the Prophet's (saw) house. In addition, when Muhammad's (saw) second son Abdullah passed away, Abu Lahab was ecstatic and began to spread the news everywhere that Muhammad (saw) had now become "*Abtar*" or without son; this was considered to be a great insult at the time.

The Wife of Abu Lahab's and her Persecution

Not content with her husband's persecution of the Prophet (saw), the wife of Abu Lahab, Umm Jameel, daughter of Harb Bin Umayyah, the sister of Abu Sufyan, did not have any less animosity than her husband towards Muhammad (saw). She used to carry bundles of thorns and would place them outside his (saw) door during the night, so when he (saw) returned home, he would fall into them and injure himself. She would spread abusive slander and fabricated stories, in order to create animosity between his companions and also between Muhammad (saw) and the rest of society.

When she heard what Allah (swt) had revealed about herself and her husband Abu Lahab, through the verses of Al-Masad, she angrily went to Abu Bakr (ra), near the Ka'bah, carrying a bowl full of stones, intending to throw them at Muhammad (saw). When she approached, she called out to Abu Bakr, "*O Abu Bakr! Where is your friend? I know that he has ridiculed me. By God, if I see him I will throw these stones on his head and into his mouth. By God I am a poet and I will recite to him 'and this ugly one we disobey and his affair we turn our backs to and his Deen we reject.'*" After saying this she left. Abu Bakr then turned to Muhammad (saw), who had been sitting next to him during this incident, "*O Prophet, did she not see you?*" He replied, "*No, she did not see me. Allah diverted her eyes (from me) and she was unable to see me.*"

The persecution inflicted on Muhammad (saw) by Abu Lahab and his wife was particularly hurtful to him (saw). This was because he had been related to them through his daughters and at least expected his family members to heed his call. Since Abu Lahab was also the uncle of Rasoolullah (saw), people would pay particular attention to his slanders as they felt that he would know Muhammad (saw) personally.

Continuing Persecution of Muhammad (saw)

Many of Muhammad's (saw) neighbours harmed him on his way home; others would make noise throughout the night to disturb his sleep and others dumped rubbish and lit fires outside his doorstep. Ibn Ishaq reported, *"All the Prophet's neighbours hurt him, they included Abu Lahab, who went as far as going into Muhammad's home and hurting him. The other neighbours were Al-Hakam Ibn Abdul Arsse Bin Umayyah, Uqbah Bin Abi Mua'et, Uday bin Hamara At-Thakafee and Ibn Asda' al-Hazalie. None of them embraced Islam except Al Hakam."*

One of them threw the foetus of an ewe onto Muhammad (saw) whilst he was praying and the others used to throw the foetus of animals onto utensils which the Prophet used to eat and drink from. As a result of these attacks, the Prophet (saw) erected a small mud hut so that whilst he prayed nobody could see nor disturb him. Whenever the Prophet (saw) found rubbish blocking his door he would remove it. When he returned, the door would once again be blocked with rubbish and filth. He used to say, *"Ya Bani Abdul-Manaf! What type of neighbours are you?"*

Uqbah Bin Abie Mu'eet was one of the worst perpetrators of these crimes against Rasoolullah. Imaam Bukhari reported on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Mas'oud that once the Prophet Muhammad (saw) was praying near the Ka'bah and Abu Jahal and his companions were sitting close by. They said to each other, *"Which one from amongst you can bring the intestines of the camel and put it over his (Muhammad's) head whilst he is making Sujood?"* Uqbah arose and said, *"I will do so!"*

He went to Muhammad (saw) whilst he entered into prostration (Sujood) and put the intestines on Rasoolullah's back between his two shoulder blades. Ibn Mas'oud said, *"I could see this happening, but could not do anything about it as I felt I did not have enough strength or power to stop it."* All those sitting with Abu Jahal were laughing, and he (saw) did not raise his head due to the weight of the camel on his back. Fatima, the daughter of Rasoolullah, removed the stomach from his back and he (saw) arose and made Du'a saying, *"O Allah deal with the Quraysh! O Allah deal with the Quraysh!"* This incensed Abu Jahal and his companions as they used to believe that any Du'a made in Makkah would always be answered. Rasoolullah (saw) continued with his Du'a, *"O Allah! Deal with Abu Jahl. O Allah! Deal with Utbah. O Allah! Deal with Al-Waleed, O Allah! Deal with Sheebah. O Allah! Deal with Umayyah. O Allah! Deal with Uqbah!"* Ibn Mas'oud commented, *"As for the seventh from amongst them, I do not remember who he is. By The One in whose Hand lies my soul, I saw all the ones that the Prophet (saw) made Du'a against being killed in the Qalib of the Battle of Badr."*

Whenever Umayyah Ibn Khallaf saw the Prophet Muhammad (saw), he used to whisper behind his back to the people and would make *Hamaz* (swearing) and *Lamaz* (ridiculing). Because of this, Allah (swt) revealed the Ayah,

وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَزَةٍ ۚ الَّذِي جَمَعَ مَالًا وَعَدَّدَهُ ۚ يَحْسَبُ أَنَّ مَالَهُ أَخْلَدَهُ ۚ
 كَلَّا لَيُنْبَذَنَّ فِي الْحُطَمَةِ ۚ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْحُطَمَةُ ۚ نَارُ اللَّهِ الْمَوْقَدَةُ ۚ الَّتِي
 تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى الْفَتَنِ ۚ إِنَّهَا عَلَيْهِمْ مُّؤَصَّدَةٌ ۚ فِي عَمَدٍ مُمَدَّدَةٍ

"Woe to every slanderer and backbiter. Who has gathered wealth and counted it, He thinks that his wealth will make him last forever! Nay! Verily, he will be thrown into the crushing Fire. And what will make you know what the crushing Fire is? The fire of Allâh, kindled, Which leaps up

over the hearts, Verily, it shall be closed in on them, In pillars stretched forth.”⁹¹

Ibn Hisham said, “Al-Humazah is the one who swears about a person in their presence and Al -Lumazah is the one who ridicules and harms a person behind their back.”

The brother of Umayyah, Ubayy Bin Khallaf, used to be a very close friend to Utbah Bin Abie Mu’eet. On one occasion they were sitting close enough to Muhammad (saw) so that they could overhear what he (saw) was saying. Utbah was listening attentively to the Prophet Muhammad (saw). When Ubayy saw this, he shouted at Utbah and said, “How dare you do that! Why were you listening to him (Muhammad (saw))? I doubt that you are still with us! Perhaps you have been affected by his teaching? Prove to me that you have not been affected”. He asked Utbah to go and spit on the face of Rasoolullah (saw). Utbah got up and went to Rasoolullah and spat on his face. Seeing that the Prophet (saw) had not reacted, Ubayy also came and did likewise. He also placed the ashes of a bone in a bowl and blew it onto the face of Rasoolullah (saw).

Abu Jahl’s Persecution

Abu Jahl occasionally came to the Prophet and listened to the Qur’an. However, when he left he never accepted him or obeyed him nor even had any fear of him. Rather, he would incessantly harm the Prophet (saw) with his sayings and actions and would prevent people from listening to him. He would go to those who had meetings with Rasoolullah (saw) and intimidate them so much so that they would leave without actually speaking with the Messenger. Whenever he saw the Prophet sitting with people he would approach them and divert them away from their meeting. He invited them to gamble with him, if no one responded, he invited them to eat the “food of three days” i.e. he

⁹¹ Al-Qur’an – Surah Al-Humazah, 104:1-9

used to dine them exquisitely. If successful, he left arrogantly and proudly as if he had accomplished something that was worthy of praise. In response to this, Allah (swt) revealed the Ayah,

فَلَا صَدَقَ وَلَا صَلَّى ۚ وَلَكِنْ كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّى ۚ ثُمَّ ذَهَبَ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ يَمِطُ ۚ
أُولَىٰ لَكَ فَأُولَىٰ ۚ ثُمَّ أُولَىٰ لَكَ فَأُولَىٰ

“So he (the disbeliever) neither believed (in this Qur’ân, in the Message of Muhammad (saw)) nor prayed! But on the contrary, he belied (this Qur’an and the Message of Muhammad (saw)) and turned away! Then he walked in full pride to his family admiring himself! Woe to you [O man (disbeliever)]! And then (again) woe to you! Again, woe to you [O man (disbeliever)]! And then (again) woe to you!”⁹²

Moreover, Abu Jahl tried to prevent Muhammad (saw) from praying. The first time Abu Jahl saw Muhammad (saw) pray in Makkah, he approached him and warned, “I told you before not do this (pray). Either stop it or I will attack you.” The Prophet (saw) replied, “How dare you Abu Jahl! Upon you is the Promise of Allah!” Abu Jahl replied sarcastically, “O Muhammad! With what are you threatening me? By Allah I am the richest person in the valley of Makkah. Neither you, nor your Allah can do anything to harm me. I am the best man who walks between these two mountains. Nobody has more supporters than I, myself.”

Allah (swt) revealed,

كَلَّا لَئِنْ لَّمْ يَنْتَهِ لَنَسْفَعًا بِالنَّاصِيَةِ ۚ نَاصِيَةٍ كَاذِبَةٍ خَاطِئَةٍ ۚ فَلْيَدْعُ نَادِيَهُ ۚ
سَنَدْعُ الزَّبَانِيَةَ ۚ كَلَّا لَا تَطِعُهُ وَاسْجُدْ وَاقْتَرِبْ

⁹² Al-Qur’an – Surah Al-Qiyamat, 75:31-35

“Have you seen him (Abu Jahl) who prevents a slave (Muhammad (saw)) when he prays? Tell me if he (Muhammad) is on the guidance of Allah. Or enjoins piety? Tell me if he (Abu Jahl) denies (the Qur’an) and turns away. Knows he not that Allah does see (what he does)? Nay! If he (Abu Jahl) ceases not we will catch him by the fore-lock. A lying sinful fore-lock! Then let him call upon his council (of helpers). We will call out the guards of Hell (to deal with Him). Nay! (O Muhammad) Do not obey him (Abu Jahl). Fall prostrate and draw near to Allah!”⁹³

Abu Jahl, even after this severe chastisement, did not awaken from his Kufr. Rather he increased his hostility against Muhammad (saw) and his message. In Saheeh Muslim, on the authority of Abu Hurayrah (ra) it is reported, “Abu Jahl said, ‘Does Muhammad (saw) still put his face on the sand (in prayer) in Makkah?’ They replied, ‘Yes.’ He then said, ‘By Al-Laat and Al-Uzzah! If I saw him doing so, I would stand over his head and would put my feet on his neck and would wipe his face in the sand!’”

Once, whilst Muhammad (saw) was praying, Abu Jahl came to put his feet over the Messenger as he had proudly professed. As he approached the Messenger (saw), he stopped abruptly and rose his arms to protect and shield himself and then ran away. His (Abu Jahl’s) companions said to him, ‘O Abu Hakam! What happened to you?’ He said, ‘By God! I saw between himself and myself a trench of fire and around it a creature that had wings.’ The Prophet (saw) said, “By Allah! If Abu Jahl had come any closer to me the angels would have taken him away and torn him into pieces.”

This was the type of aggression that the Prophet faced despite his unique personality, respect, status and position amongst Muslims and despite the protection of Abu Taalib, one of the most respected men in Makkah. This treatment was harsher and more severe than anything

⁹³ Al-Qur’an – Surah Al-’Alaq, 96:15-19

else they had experienced. On top of this, tribes identified and tortured any of its members if they were Muslim or had any inclination towards Islam.

We learn from these examples that those who are against the call of Islam will try their utmost to prevent those who follow the footsteps of Rasoolullah (saw) from delivering their message. They will prevent any platform being used, any crowds being gathered and stoop to as low as attacking physically those who listen and those who deliver the call. For example, Al-Aknas Bin Shurayka Ath -Thakafie used to attack the Prophet a lot and has been described in the Qur'an nine times.

Similarly, for Al-Waleed Bin Mughirah, Allah (swt) described him nine times. Allah (swt) has said,

وَلَا تُطِيعْ كُلَّ حَلَّافٍ مِّمِّينٍ يَوْمَ هَمَّازٍ مَّشَاءٍ بَنَمِيمٍ يَوْمَ مَنْعٍ لِلْخَيْرِ مُعْتَدٍ أَثِيمٍ
عُتِلُّ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ زَنِيمٍ

"And obey not everyone who swears much, and is considered worthless, A slanderer, going about with calumnies, Hinderer of the good, transgressor, sinful, Cruel, after all that base-born (of illegitimate birth),"⁹⁴

Torturing of the Sahabah

In spite of torturing and attacking the leader of the Muslims, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) himself, Quraysh still wanted more retribution. Thus they also began to attack, slander and oppress his (saw) companions, many of whom were weak and could not defend themselves. Despite these calamities, Muhammad (saw) prepared his companions by perfecting their Belief in Allah (swt) and the Last Day allowing them to withstand the physical and tangible Qurayshi torture.

⁹⁴ Al-Qur'an - Surah Al-Qalam, 68:10-13

He (saw) also explained that the suffering the Muslims were facing was not as severe a test as for the people before (i.e. the ashaab of previous Prophets) many of whom were burned or even skinned alive. However, it is narrated regarding the torture of the companions of Rasoolullah (saw) that Ibn Hisham said, *"Anybody who has a soft heart (i.e. of a nervous disposition) would not like to hear how the Muslims were tortured."*

Torturing of Uthman Ibn Affan (ra)

Uthman Ibn Affan, the great sahabi and the third of the righteously guided Khalifahs was not spared the torture. Despite his noble lineage and personal wealth his uncle was furious when he learned that Uthman had embraced Islam. He would wrap Uthman in a carpet made from the leaves of date trees and would then light a fire under the leaves. The fire would slowly ebb away at the leaves causing smoke to bellow leaving Uthman (ra) breathless, engulfed in the smoke of the fire.

Torturing of Mus'ab Ibn Umayr (ra)

When the mother of Mus'ab Ibn Umayr, heard that Mus'ab became Muslim, she imprisoned him and prevented him any access to food and provisions. Having tortured him thus, she eventually decided to throw him out onto the street. Mus'ab, prior to being Muslim, was known to be of great wealth and from a comfortable background. He was described as having the softest skin in Makkah and his scent was the most fragrant of Makkah. However, once he became Muslim and was thrown out onto the road, his skin became dry and hard and he no longer had the perfumes that once adorned his body.

Torturing of Bilal (ra)

We now look at Bilal, the servant of Umayyah Bin Khallaf. Umayyah used to tie a rope around the neck of Bilal and would give this to the children to drag him and pull him around the mountains of Makkah, once he learnt about Bilal's conversion. It was often tied very tightly

leaving blood stained marks. Umayyah used to put hot oil around the site of bleeding and would tie the rope even tighter to increase the suffering. He would also accompany the children and use a stick to hit Bilal as he worked. Each day he would put Bilal in the middle of the desert at the height of the sun without food or water and he ordered others to place a large rock on Bilal's chest to prevent him from breathing easily.

He carried on like this, remonstrating with Bilal to denounce Muhammad (saw) and would say, *"I will never stop torturing you, until either you die or you declare Kufr in Muhammad (saw) and you return back to worshipping the Lat and Uzzah."* Bilal could not reply due to the pressure of the weight of rock on his chest. He could only say, *"Ahadun Ahad", "The One! The One!"* This carried on until Muhammad (saw) heard about Bilal's situation and requested Abu Bakr (ra) to release Bilal (ra) from his slavemaster, Umayyah Ibn Khallaf. Perhaps Umayyah would want some money for Bilal and would eventually free him.

After eleven days of torture, Abu Bakr (ra) succeeded in convincing Umayyah to sell Bilal (ra) for seven *Uwaaq* of silver. In their eyes Bilal (ra) was now Abu Bakr's slave. However, Abu Bakr freed him at once from the shackles of slavery. Bilal, reminding the people of Abu Bakr's nobility, would say *"I was the slave of Abu Bakr for a part of the day when he took me from Umayyah, fed me and washed me. Then he said to me, 'O Bilal, you are not my slave. You never were my slave. (Go) You are now free.'"*

The Torture of Aal-Yaasir

Ammar Bin Yaasir was the servant of Banu Makhzoum. He embraced Islam along with his mother and father. The Mushriks of the Quraysh dragged them from their homes when the sun was at her Meridien, the hottest time of the day, to the desert lands where there was no shade. They would put them on the *Abta'* (flat-rock) and tortured them in the heat. Once Muhammad (saw) passed by the *Abta'* whilst they were

being tortured and said, *"Be steady-fast and patient family of Yaasir. You have been promised paradise."*

Days passed by. Eventually, Yaasir passed away whilst being tortured. Abu Jahl then went to Sumaya, the wife of Yaasir, expecting to persuade her to say Kufr, since her husband had now died. However, she resisted and spat on the fact of Abu Jahl when he insulted the Prophet (saw). Enraged, Abu Jahl picked up his spear and struck it into the heart of Sumaya awarding her the status of being the first Shaheeda (female martyr) in Islam.

Ammar, the son of Yaasir, was now the sole remaining survivor of the family. Sometimes they would tie him and place boiling hot rocks on his chest. On other occasions they would pour boiling hot water over him, to make him say Kufr. They would say, *"We will never leave you until you insult Muhammad and praise our Laat and Uzzah."* He was tortured like this for more than 2 weeks until they placed the burning embers of charcoal on his back leaving him scarred for life. He had by now witnessed with his own eyes, the murder of both his mother and father. He had endured torture for over two weeks. Eventually he gave in and said, *"I will say whatever you desire of me."* and he praised Al-Laat and Al-Uzzah. After this utterance the torturing stopped. Distraught, Ammar bin Yaasir went to Rasoolullah (saw) crying and asked him to request Allah (swt) to forgive him for what he had said. Allah (swt) revealed to Muhammad (saw) for Ammar bin Yaasir,

مَنْ كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِهِ إِلَّا مَنْ أُكْرِهَ وَقَلْبُهُ مُطْمَئِنٌّ بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَكِنْ مَنْ
شَرَحَ بِالْكُفْرِ صَدْرًا فَعَلَيْهِمْ غَضَبٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ

"Whoever disbelieves in Allah after his belief, except him who is forced thereto and whose heart is at rest with Faith; but

such as open their breasts to disbelief, on them is the wrath from Allah, and theirs will be a great torment.”⁹⁵

The Prophet then turned to Ammar and said, *“O Ammar! If they return and torture you repeat again what you said to them. Allah (swt) sends to you an ayah (to do so) as long as your heart remains full of Emaan (belief).”*

Torturing of Uthman Bin Maz’un

Other people who had followed the teachings of Muhammad (saw) sought protection from their friends, who were still disbelievers, with some influence in their tribes. This was because they feared the violent attacks that the Quraysh would inflict on them.

Ibn Hisham narrates that Uthman Bin Maz’un initially had the protection of Waleed Bin Al-Mughirah. However, he felt embarrassed to have the protection of a staunch enemy of Allah (swt) and His Messenger and thus rather than relying on the protection of a human being, he decided to place full trust and reliance in Allah (swt).

Soon after renouncing Waleed’s protection, Uthman was engaged in a heated argument with a non-believer, which lead ultimately to the Kaffir striking Uthman across the face causing him to lose an eye. Waleed Bin Al-Mughirah, who was present when the incident occurred, said, *“By God! O son of my brother, your eye was safe from this injury and you would have been well-protected by me.”* Uthman replied, *“No, by God! The eye that is still unhurt longs to have what has happened to the other for God’s sake.”* He continued, *“O ‘Abdu Shams, I am here in the vicinity and shelter of One who is exceedingly superior to you in honour and glory.”*

⁹⁵ Al-Qur’an – Surah An-Nahl, 16:106

The Bravery of Ibn Mas'oud (ra)

It is reported that one day the Muslims consulted each other and asked, *"The Quraysh have never really heard the Qur'an."* They asked each other who would go and recite it to them. Ibn Mas'oud, a man in his twenties, volunteered, but the rest of the Muslims objected feeling that he did not have the support of a strong enough tribe to protect him in case he was beaten and attacked. But Ibn Mas'oud was adamant and kept insisting until they chose him to recite. He went to sit in the Ka'bah and began reciting the verses of the Qur'an aloud. One of the Quraysh came to him and said, *"This is a part of what Muhammad has brought."* When the rest of the Quraysh heard this, they rose from their sitting positions and began to beat Ibn Mas'oud around the head while he recited the Qur'an until he could recite no further.

Ibn Mas'oud returned to the rest of the Sahabah who said to him painfully *"We told you that this would happen."* He replied to them that he was willing to do it again as long as the pleasure of Allah (swt) was attained.

Torturing of Abu Fuqayha & Khabbab Ibn Arat

Another Sahabah, Abu Fuqayha was the servant of Bani Abdu Darr. His master tied him by the legs to a horse and would ride the horse around the areas of Makkah where there were many small sharp rocks and stones. They would shout at him day and night asking him to pronounce Kufr.

Khabbab Ibnu Arat was the slave of Umm Anmar Bint Siba'. He faced all different types of torture. It has been reported that he would be dragged by his hair from place to place and would be made to sleep over fire-heated rocks and stones at night. He however, never stopped repeating the Shahadah⁹⁶.

⁹⁶ *Shahadah* – (lit. to bear witness) The Islamic proclamation of Belief

Torturing of the Sahabiyaat

The torture was not restricted to the male Sahabah. Three Sahabiyaat, Zunaira, An-Nahdiyah and her daughter Umm Ubaise were three servants who embraced Islam. They were always tortured together; being dragged on the floor, stripped naked and humiliated in public, and their chests scalded with hot oils and rocks. Umar Ibn Khattab, would often torture the slave of Bani Mu'mil and would say, *"I only stopped beating you because I got tired"*.

Torturing of Abu Bakr (ra)

Upon hearing of the torture of the Sahabiyaat, Abu Bakr went to each of their masters and spent his money buying the women their freedom. He also freed Bilal Ibn Rabbah and Amr Bin Fuhayra. He kept on buying and releasing slaves that were being tortured until he had no money left to save himself when he was surrounded by Utbah Bin Rabbiah and his mob. Utbah shouted, *"You have helped many others!! Who can help you now?"* and began to beat Abu Bakr with his slippers. He then threw him onto the floor and began to jump on him and kick him. The rest of the mob began to laugh and blood began to flow from the nose and face of Abu Bakr (ra) so much so that when he returned no-one was able to recognise him. The Tribe of Bani Taym took Abu Bakr back to his home, thinking that he had passed away as he lay unconscious. At the end of the night he awoke and enquired, *"What happened to Rasoolullah (saw)?"* not caring for his own well-being. They replied that Muhammad (saw) had not been touched since he had the protection of his uncle.

Whenever Abu Jahl came to know that a well-respected person embraced Islam, he would go to him and try and convince him to leave the Deen. If that did not work he would promise the person wealth, position and honour. If the person still rejected, then Abu Jahl would promise destruction and boycott. However, if the person was weak or a slave, Abu Jahl would beat them personally.

The Muslim's Reaction to Hostility

It was a natural response for the Prophet (saw) and his companions to take necessary steps to protect themselves as well as their families from Quraysh's oppression. The fear that they may face torture from the non-believers was the reason why the Prophet (saw) initially allowed the Sahabah not to reveal their belief or declare Islam publicly. He (saw) also took certain precautions to protect the Sahabah, meeting them in secrecy. If the Quraysh knew the location of their meetings, they would attempt to disrupt them and thus would have prevented the culturing, teaching and development of the Sahabah by the Prophet (saw). As nobody knows or can prove what the Messenger (saw) was thinking, we can only presuppose the Prophet's intentions through the actions he undertook; whether he intentionally met the Sahabah secretly or whether it was simply out of circumstance. The reality was that the Prophet met and spoke to his Sahabah secretly, and they would leave their houses in the early part of the morning individually so that they could convene at the hill (*Shehab*) of Makkah and meet with the Prophet (saw).

On one occasion, a group of hooligans from the Quraysh approached the Muslims and began swearing at them, Sai'd Ibn Abi Waqqas became infuriated and retaliated against the Quraysh. He threw a stone at one of them ripping a gash across his head. This incident became famous as the time when the first blood was spilt for the cause of Islam. Muhammad (saw) as an individual proclaimed his Da'wah publicly and performed his Salat in the Ka'bah in front of the Mushriks.

However it was clear that he met the Muslims at the house of a Sahabah known as Ibn Abi Arqam Bin Al-Makzumi. This house was known as Dar Al-Arqam⁹⁷, which was situated close to Mount Safar. It was described as being an isolated and deserted place so the Prophet (saw) initially prepared it as a place of meeting and teaching. At the early stages of Prophethood, it can be seen that the Muslims worked primarily as individuals; however as the number of the Muslims increased it was only natural for them to work as one collective body. It is reported that when Muhammad (saw) publicly declared his Da'wah collectively, he had amongst him between 34 and 40 people including some women who had not before publicly declared their Shahadah.

The Muslims knew Dar Al-Arqam as a place where they could meet each other regularly and a place where anybody willing to embrace Islam could meet the Prophet face-to-face and discuss openly with him.

The First Hijra

The Quraysh never eased their aggression or torture of the Muslims making it very difficult for them to continue to live in Makkah. The situation got so difficult for the Muslims that a few of them, in the middle of the 5th year after Prophethood, came to the Prophet (saw) complaining about the hardship that they had been enduring. They began to consider other options in order to protect themselves since all the precautions that they had taken had neither eased nor prevented their suffering. Because of this, in the month of Rajab of the same year,

⁹⁷ Contrary to popular belief, the Muslims met in the 5th year after the commencement of Prophethood at Al-Arqam. The date is important since it refutes the concept that Muhammad (saw) had used the house solely in the early stage of his Da'wah to culture his Sahabah. This is because the period from which Muhammad (saw) used the house was two years after he (saw) had gone public with his call i.e. believed to be in the 3rd year. From this we can understand that there was never two clearly defined stages to the Prophet's da'wah as such, rather the difference was as to whether the Muslims proclaimed their da'wah collectively or individually.

the Prophet Muhammad (saw) permitted a group of Sahabah consisting of 10 men and 4 women to migrate to Abyssinia.

Uthman Ibn Affan, who also took with him his wife Ruqayah, the youngest daughter of Muhammad, led this small band of people. The Prophet (saw) said *"The first household to make Hijrah for the sake of Allah after Ibrahim (as) and Lut (as) was Uthman Ibn Affan and Ruqayah and the others (with him)."*

One by one, these Muslims fled Makkah secretly during the dead of the night so that the Quraysh would not be aware of their disappearance. They passed through the desert all the way to the sea, until they arrived at a small port called Shoaiba. From there they hired a small boat, which belonged to a local Abyssinian businessman and sailed finally to Abyssinia. The Quraysh, on discovering their sudden departure, sent a small scout party to seek out and arrest the fugitives. Fortunately for the Muslims, they had arrived at Abyssinia safely before the Mushriks could find them.

The Quraysh Send a Delegation

Realising that the Muslims had entered the protection of Abyssinia, the Quraysh sent two of their most shrewd diplomats to negotiate with the Negus (king) for the return of these 'troublemakers'. The two representatives sent were Amr bin Al-Ass and Abdullah Abi Rabi'ah. When they met with the ministers and priests of Abyssinia they showered them with gifts including gold, silver and women. They began to explain to them how some people had left their lands recently to come to Abyssinia as they had forgone the Deen of the forefathers i.e. idolatry. Initially, the diplomats spoke to the priests and told them, *"We know that you are a nation of religion and we respect you for this. But this group of people are bringing a new religion different to yours."* The priests replied, *"Let us consult our King (the Negus)"*. The Priests were convinced by the argument of the diplomats and approved the Muslims'

extradition, but had to get approval from their King, before any further action could be taken. The priests spoke in favour of what the diplomats were calling for and the King then summoned the ambassadors, who pleased the King immensely by offering further riches to their kingdom.

The two Qurayshi representatives reiterated what they had said to the priests, by saying, *“O King! A group of our deviant youth have left the Deen of their fathers and mothers; they have run away from their homes and have entered your land without entering into your Deen. They bring a new Deen that they have innovated, which neither you nor we know about. We know that you are on the best Deen; and we have been sent to you as ambassadors from our noble people in order to return them back to their uncles and fathers and mothers, hoping that we may still be able to guide and save them; as they know exactly where their defections and distortions lie.”* The priests said, *“That is indeed true and very wise.”* They turned their attention to the Negus and said, *“O King! Hand over the Muslims to them! Extradite them back to their own country.”* However, the Negus being a fair and just ruler said, *“I want to investigate this matter further. Bring these people to me as I want to hear both sides of the story.”*

The Muslims were immediately summoned to the King. As they approached him, they agreed amongst themselves only to speak the truth regardless of the possible dangers this may bring upon them. They also agreed, as is the Sunnah of Muhammad (saw), to let only the Amir⁹⁸ amongst them speak. Ja’far Ibn Abu Taalib was elected to act as Amir on behalf of the group, and his decision as to what he said to the Negus would therefore be binding on the remainder.

⁹⁸ *Amir* – (lit. prince), commonly translated as leader

It was a tradition amongst the Abyssinian's to bow their heads out of respect for the priests and then to the King as one entered their *Majlis*⁹⁹. And thus it was expected by all present, for the Muslims to act as the two Arabian ambassadors had done previously. However, contrary to custom the Muslims did not do so, rather they entered the gathering as one would in the presence of common people. The Negus shocked at this disregard to their traditions, demanded, *"Why did you not do so (i.e. bow)?"* They replied, *"We do not bow our heads to anyone except God the Almighty."* The Negus continued, *"So what is this (new) Deen that has caused you to leave your family, your tribes as well as your people? Why did you not embrace my religion instead or any of the other known religions?"*

Ja'far (ra) said, *"O King! We are a people who used to live in Jahiliyyah (ignorance based on man-made law). We worshipped idols, ate un-slaughtered meat, committed all manner of adultery, severed relations with our relatives and harmed our neighbours as well as our guests. The strong amongst us exploited the weak (we continued like this) until Allah (swt) sent a Messenger to us, who is of our people and who we know very well. We know his lineage, his trustworthiness and his chastity (is established), and he is well known to us."*

"He calls us to God; to worship Him and submit to Him alone and to abandon all the idols that we previously worshipped; that which our ancestors worshipped and we believed in, from the stones to the rocks and the trees. He ordered us to speak the truth and to honour our trust and promises, to maintain good relations with our relatives as well as our neighbours and guests. He prevented us using our hand to violate anyone's sanctity; whether it be their life or their blood, and he forbade us from committing any fornication or providing false testimony. He forbade us from robbing the money of the orphan or accusing a (chaste) woman (in adultery) without evidence."

⁹⁹ *Majlis* – (lit. place of sitting), assembly or gathering

"He also ordered us to submit and to obey none but God and never to associate any other being with him. To pray, to offer Zakat and to fast. So we believe in him and accept what he says and follow what he has brought to us from God and we worship none but God and we do not associate anybody with him. We forbid all that God has forbidden upon us and we enjoy whatever God has permitted for us.

"Our people disagreed with us and showed animosity towards us, they persecuted and tortured us in order to make us leave our Deen and to return to the practices of old; to worship idols and to commit all the prohibited actions that we committed in the past. So when they started to suppress us, discriminate against us, oppress and torture us and finally made it intolerable for us to practice our Deen, we left our country. Our Messenger told us to go to Abyssinia, as he said that there is a King there who is well known, you will never be oppressed under his custody and he is the best in providing protection."

After hearing this speech the Negus inquired, *"Do you have something from what your God says?"* Ja'far replied, *"Yes."* The King said, *"Recite it to me."* Ja'far read to him the beginning of Surah Maryam¹⁰⁰, ***"Kaf, Ha, Ya, A'iyn, Saad"*** up to the verse, ***"And peace be on him (Yahya) the day he was born, and the day he will be raised up to life (again)!"*** until the Negus and his priests prevented him from reciting any further. The Negus said, *"Verily this and what Isa brought to us came from the same source."* He then turned to the delegation from the Quraysh and said, *"I cannot return them (the Muslims) to you. I cannot give them up to you. Go back to your tribe and tell them that I will never forsake those who believe in something similar to that which I believe in."*

The two ambassadors left the Negus and remained outside the Council. Amr Ibn A'ss was infuriated and said to Abdullah Ibn Abi Rabi'ah, *"By*

¹⁰⁰ Al-Qur'an – Surah Al-Maryam, 19:1-15

God! I will come again tomorrow and kill the Muslims one by one, since I now know where they live." Abdullah Ibn Rabi'ah, trying to calm Amr down said, *"Don't act as such! The Muslims in Abyssinia have relatives back in Makkah. If we harm them here, then there may be ramifications for us back in Makkah."* However, Amr Ibn A'ss persisted, *"Tomorrow I will speak (again) with the King so that he will throw them out himself."*

Since Amr Ibn Ass was Qurayshi and had a good grasp of the Arabic language, he knew full well what the Muslims used to recite whilst they were in Makkah, as they would recite the ayats of the Qur'an openly and publicly. With a new lease of life, he returned to the King the next day and said, *"Are you aware that the Muslims recite blasphemy against Isa Ibn Maryam?"* The Negus replied, *"What do they say?"* Amr replied, *"Ask them yourself. See what they think about Jesus (Isa)."* The Negus became upset and summoned the Muslims once again to his council. When the Muslims heard that the King had called them to be interrogated again they became worried as they felt that Amr Ibn Ass had hatched a plot for them to be thrown out of Abyssinia. They entered into the King's council.

The King addressed them, *"What do you people say about Jesus?"* Ja'far replied, *"We only say what the Messenger Muhammad (saw) says about him."* The Negus replied, *"What does he say (then)?"* Ja'far began to quote the following ayats,

وَأَذْكُرْ فِي الْكِتَابِ مَرْيَمَ إِذِ اتَّخَذَتْ مِنْ أَهْلِهَا مَكَانًا شَرْفِيًّا

"And mentioned in the Book (O Muhammad!) is the story of Maryam, when she withdrew in seclusion from her family to a place facing east."¹⁰¹

Until the ayat,

وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيَّ يَوْمَ وُلِدْتُ وَيَوْمَ أَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ أُبْعَثُ حَيًّا

*“And peace be upon me the day I was born, and the day I die
and the day I shall be raised alive!”¹⁰²*

Visibly moved by this, the Negus picked up his stick and drew a line across the floor saying, *“The only difference between ourselves and yourselves is that you call him Isa Ibn Maryam and we call him Isa Ibn Allah.”* This statement of the Negus made the priests around him feel uneasy, since they felt he was compromising a fundamental aspect of his belief. He turned to them and said, *“Even if this displeases you, this is truly the only difference between us and them.”* He then turned to the Muslims saying, *“Go! You are protected in my lands. You are under my (personal) protection. Whoever swears at you will be punished and will have to pay you compensation. Whoever attacks you will pay a fine. Whoever discriminates against you will be fined.”* The Negus allocated houses for the Muslims to stay in, and some means of welfare for them to use to look after themselves.

He turned back to the Ambassadors from Makkah and said, *“By God! If you gave me a mountain of gold as payment to harm anyone of them (the Muslims) I would never accept it.”* He said to the priests, *“Return the gifts to these people. We are not needy for them. I will never accept any form of bribery. If you want to maintain diplomatic links with me then honour who I honour and respect those I respect (i.e. the Muslims).”*

After this noble statement, the King threw the Ambassadors out of his Assembly. Umm Salamah, who narrated this incident, then

¹⁰¹ Al-Qur'an – Surah Al-Maryam, 19:16

¹⁰² Al-Qur'an – Surah Al-Maryam, 19:33

commented, *"We then left the gathering and were happy to live in the best lodgings amongst the best (most hospitable) neighbours."*

When the two ambassadors returned to Makkah, the Quraysh realized the severity of the Message that Muhammad (saw) had brought. The Abyssinian King was willing to sever diplomatic and political ties with the Quraysh over a handful of slaves and young folk who were viewed as a nuisance and trouble by their own folk. They had to act quickly to prevent any more undermining of their authority.

Quraysh pressurise Abu Taalib again

The Quraysh sent a delegation to Abu Taalib with a severe warning and said, *"Now you have to stop your protection of Muhammad. O Abu Taalib! You are old; however, you still remain noble amongst us and we respect you. We did ask you before to prevent your nephew but you did not prevent him. By God! We can no longer be patient. He (saw) insults our parents and ridicules our gods, and our aspirations. Either you stop him or we will fight you both until one of us perishes."*

Abu Taalib took this warning very seriously and called the Messenger (saw) and said, *"O My Nephew! My people have come back to me, they asked me again (about you). This time they are willing to attack both you and me. Spare my life and yours and do not impose on me a burden that I cannot bear."*

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) said to him, *"O Uncle! If they put the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left in order for me to leave this matter I will never do so until Allah's Deen becomes dominant or they kill me."*¹⁰³

¹⁰³ This saying *"If they put the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left in order for me to leave this matter I will never do so until Allah's Deen becomes dominant or they kill me"* has caused some dispute amongst the Fuqaha of Seerah as to whether it was said by Muhammad (saw) when the Quraysh first visited Abu Taalib or on the second occasion. Some Scholars believe it to have been said on both occasions and that is what we agree upon.

The Prophet (saw) began to cry and got up to leave. His uncle weeping said, *"Wait! O my nephew, say whatever you wish to say. I will never give you up as long as I am alive."*

The Quraysh realised that they could no longer stop Muhammad (saw), Abu Taalib had failed them and was even willing to face separation and animosity from them as a result of his nephew. They would say, *"His love for his nephew blinds his heart and mind."* Despite, these set backs, the Quraysh drew up a plan to try and win over Abu Taalib. Since adoption was common practice amongst the Arabs, they thought that if they could offer Abu Taalib a youth who was braver, stonger and shrewder than Muhammad (saw) then perhaps he would exchange his protection of him (saw) for his new-found 'son'. They eventually chose Al-Umarah, the son of Al-Waleed Ibn Mughirah, thinking he to be the perfect replacement.

They went back to Abu Taalib and said, *"O Abu Taalib! This young man is the most powerful, the strongest, the richest, the smartest, the most respected (amongst us), take him, he is yours. Do whatever you wish with him. Whomever you support, he will support. He will become subservient to you. Make him your son instead of your nephew. In return you give us your nephew, the one who rejects your religion and the religion of your forefathers. The one who divides your community and ridicules their way of life, we will deal with him. Umarah is the one who lives upon our customs and way of life."*

Abu Taalib reacted angrily and said, *"How dare you! You have come to me with a deal in which you give me your son to feed and clothe and I give you mine to be killed? By God! This will never be!"* Al-Mut'ab Ibn Adie the son of Nawfal Bin Abdul-Manaaf said, *"Your people have been just with you. They have exhausted all means to solve their problem and they have even offered their best child to become your son. Yet, you do not accept anything from them and reject all offers?"* Abu Taalib said, *"By God, they have not been fair with me. All of you have gathered together to do as you please. Al-*

Mut'ab, instead of standing with me, you stand in opposition to me and provoke them against me. All of you leave me! Do whatever you wish. I will never give up my nephew!"

More Attacks on the Prophet (saw)

When the leaders of the Quraysh failed to convince Abu Taalib, they gathered together and thought about killing the Messenger Muhammad (saw). News spread throughout Makkah that Abu Taalib and the leaders of the Quraysh were arguing about the safety and protection of Muhammad (saw). This news strengthened the Muslims, since a lot of the people began to sympathise with what Muhammad (saw) and Abu Taalib had to endure; feeling that it was extremely cowardly for so many people to unite against just one person. The hostility therefore began to take a new dimension. Initially, a more physical approach was undertaken. Once, Utaybah Bin Abu Lahab, the cousin of Muhammad (saw), came to him (saw) and said, *"I declare disbelief in Al-Najmi Iza Hawa (i.e. the Qur'an). And in the one who comes close to you (Jibrael)." He then grabbed Rasoolullah (saw) by his shirt and spat on his face. The Prophet (saw) made Du'a to Allah and said, "O Allah! Chose one beast from Your Beasts to deal with Utaybah."*

Utaybah returned to Abu Jahl and proudly related to him what he had done to the Messenger Muhammad (saw). Abu Jahl asked, *"How did he (saw) react?"* Utaybah said, *"He made Du'a against me."* Abu Jahl said, *"What did he supplicate for?"* Utaybah said, *"He (saw) said, 'O Allah, designate for me one of your beasts'".* Abu Jahl became increasingly worried since he felt that the Dua' would be accepted. He warned his son about travelling alone and appointed a group from the Quraysh to accompany him as bodyguards. He ordered them, *"Do not leave his side."*

Wherever he goes, go with him. Whenever you set-up camp, sit around him and leave him in the middle so that nobody can approach him."

Once, Utaybah with his bodyguards camped in As-Sham near Az-Zarkha, (now in Jordan). On that night a lion came to the camp and jumped into his camp. Utaybah shrieked, *"O my God! I am going to be killed the way Muhammad (saw) asked for me to be killed. I am going to be killed in As-Sham whilst he (Muhammad) is in Makkah."* The group of bodyguards rose and tried to protect Utaybah. However, the lion went straight through to Utaybah and bit off his head, instantly killing him.

Plots to Kill the Messenger of Allah (swt)

Uqbah Bin Abie-Ma'eet wanted to kill Muhammad (saw) whilst he was in Sujood in prayer. He came to Rasoolullah and pushed him to the floor and stood on Muhammad's (saw) neck until his eyes began to bulge out of their sockets. Muhammad (saw) called to Allah, *"O Allah! Let one of your soldiers deal with him."* Uqbah suddenly became afraid and ran away shouting, *"By God, By God! A lion is chasing me! A lion is chasing me!"* The people mocked him saying, *"By God! Uqbah has become a madman!"*

Ibn Ishaq narrated that Abu Jahl began to gather people together and said to them, *"O people of the Quraysh! You know what Muhammad (saw) has done against our religion, our customs and our idols. I pledge I will kill him for you."* He came to Muhammad (saw), carrying a large rock in order to strike it at his (saw) head. As he approached Muhammad (saw) he began to shiver and threw the rock down. He ran away shouting, *"By God! I have never seen such a large camel! Its head was so large, its neck so long and its teeth and fangs so sharp, and it was coming to eat me!"* People mocked him saying, *"What has happened to Abu Jahl? Camels do not eat men. Has he lost his sanity?"*

In another incident reported by Ibn Ishaq on the authority of Abdullah Ibn Amr Ibn 'Aas, it is reported that, *"Once I (Abdullah) came to the Ka'bah and the Qurayshi leaders were gathered saying, 'Let us rise and kill him (Muhammad)'. As Muhammad (saw) passed them in Tawaaf,*

they began to laugh and ridicule him. On the second circuit of Tawaaf they continued to ridicule Muhammad (saw) and he said, *"There is no power except that of Allah (La Hawla Wa La Quwata)".* On the third circuit, he (saw) said, *"By He, in Whose Hand is my soul. I bring you slaughter."* This made one from the Quraysh ask him, *"Do you now repeat the sayings of the ignorant ones?"* Muhammad (saw) replied, *"By God! I am going to slaughter you."* All of those gathered stood to attention and said, *"Let us leave him. He does not know what he is saying."* However, the next day they returned whilst Muhammad (saw) was doing Tawaaf. This time they agreed not to speak with Muhammad (saw), rather just to jump on him and kill him.

Abdullah Ibn Amr Ibn 'Aas said that they gathered around Muhammad (saw) and grabbed his clothes and pushed him into the corner. Whilst they were struggling, Abu Bakr (ra) came and began to push them away and called to the people, *"They want to kill Muhammad (saw)!"* He began to cry and said, *"Do you want to kill a person who just says, 'My Lord is Allah?'"*

As a result of these incidents, people began to fear Muhammad (saw) as they had witnessed the acceptance by Allah of his Du'as, and they had also seen the protection of Allah (swt) over him (saw) preventing any harm whatsoever befalling him.

Muslim Gains from Quraysh

In this atmosphere of oppression and naked aggression towards Muhammad (saw) and his companions, Allah (swt) selected for the Muslims leading figures from amongst the Quraysh to enter into Islam. This in turn helped strengthen the call of Islam and showed the Quraysh that the call was not only going to be accepted by the poor and the destitute and those who in their eyes, had nothing to live for. On the contrary, people, who at the time, had been given “celebrity status” amongst the masses would also bow down to the Will of Allah (swt). Both rich and poor would ultimately succumb to the Will of Allah (swt).

Hamza Ibn Abdul-Muttalib accepts Islam

In the last six months of the 3rd year following Prophethood, Hamza Ibn Abdul Muttalib embraced Islam. He held a position of great dignity and strength, as he was the son of Abdul-Muttalib. It has been narrated that Hamza became Muslim after an incident where Abu Jahl was passing by the Prophet whilst he (saw) was addressing the people in Al-Safa'. Abu Jahl grabbed Muhammad (saw) by his clothes and pushed him from side to side swearing and insulting him (saw). He then picked up a stone and hit Muhammad (saw) on his head causing a gash that began to bleed. The blood poured down the Prophet's (saw) face and onto his ears. Abu Jahl then threw him (saw) to the ground and left him in front of the people. He returned back to the people of the Quraysh and related to them proudly what he had done.

One of the slave-girls of Abdullah Ibn Jadaan saw this incident and when Hamza returned from hunting, carrying his arrows and sword,

she came to him and said, *"Did you see what Abu Jahl did? He struck and wounded the head of Muhammad (saw)."* Hamza immediately went to the Prophet (saw) and saw the wound Abu Jahl had inflicted. He left looking for Abu Jahl. When Hamza caught sight of Abu Jahl, he was shouting and swearing about Muhammad (saw). Hamza approached him and said, *"O coward! The one bereft of honour! Are you swearing at my nephew? Do you not know that I have accepted his Deen?"* He pulled out his bow and struck the face of Abu Jahl, leaving a bleeding wound across his face. The tribe of Abu Jahl, Banu Makzoum, then stood up and the tribe of Hamza, Banu Hashim, rose in confrontation. Abu Jahl shouted, *"Leave Hamza. Leave him. It is true. I did swear and attack his nephew, Muhammad. I acted out of order. I fear that if you fight now it will give great strength to Muhammad."*

Hamza left Abu Jahl and went back to Muhammad (saw) and said, *"O Muhammad! I believed in you from the very first day you began to call people. The real man is not the one who has physical strength or carries the sword. Rather it is the one who is not afraid to speak that which he believes without worrying about the consequences of his people."* After this Hamza declared his Shahadah.

The acceptance of Islam by Hamza dealt a blow to the Quraysh and provided dignity and support for the Muslims. The people of Makkah began to speak and say that Muhammad (saw) now had someone with power. However, Allah (swt) was to deal the Quraysh another great blow. After Hamza became Muslim, Muhammad (saw) made Du'a to Allah (swt) asking, *"O Allah! Dignify this Deen (Islam) and give it protection with either of these two Protectors, Umar Bin Khattab or Amru Bin Hisham (Abu Jahl)."*

Umar Bin Al-Khattab Embraces Islam

In Dhul-Hijjah, in the last month of the 3rd year after Prophethood,

Umar Bin Al-Khattab became Muslim¹⁰⁴. It is reported by Imaam Al-Wahidie and by the authority of Imaam Bukhari and Imaam Muslim that Umar Bin Al-Khattab once went to the Ka'bah at night whilst Muhammad (saw) was standing in prayer reciting,

الْحَاقَّةُ يَوْمَ الْحَاقَّةِ

*"The Inevitable (Day of Resurrection)! What is the Inevitable?"*¹⁰⁵

He (Umar) heard this and said to himself, "By God! What this man is reciting is not poetry as those of the Quraysh claim it to be." As Muhammad (saw) continued to recite, he reached the ayah,

إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ رَسُولٍ كَرِيمٍ
يَا وَمَا هُوَ بِقَوْلِ شَاعِرٍ قَلِيلًا مَّا تُؤْمِنُونَ

*"That this is verily, the word of an honoured Messenger. It is not the word of a poet; little is it that you believe!"*¹⁰⁶

Umar, feeling that the Qur'an was addressing him, thought to himself, "This man is reciting what I have just said to myself." A little later Umar began to think, "Perhaps this is the word of a fortune-teller?" The ayah was then revealed,

وَلَا بِقَوْلِ كَاهِنٍ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُونَ

*"Nor is it the word of a fortune-teller; little is it that you remember."*¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ There are many narrations about how Hamza and Umar Bin al -Khattab became Muslim and people often confuse the dates as to when they accepted the Deen. However, whether we say they embraced Islam in year 3 or year 6 after Prophethood, the fact that they both embraced Islam cannot be denied

¹⁰⁵ Al-Qur'an - Surah Al-Haaqqah, 69:1-2

¹⁰⁶ Al-Qur'an - Surah Al-Haaqqah, 69:40-41

¹⁰⁷ Al-Qur'an - Surah Al-Haaqqah, 69:42

Again Umar thought to himself, *"Maybe this Qur'an is addressing me? From whom can it be?"* Allah (swt) then revealed the ayah,

تَزِيلُ مِّن رَّبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

*"This is the Revelation sent down from the Lord of the 'Alamin (All that exists)."*¹⁰⁸

Umar once again felt that the Qur'an was addressing him and would comment after he had become Muslim, *"From this point Islam entered my heart."*

The seed of Islam was thus implanted into the heart of Umar by the Will of Allah (swt). However, instead of forsaking the way of life he led, the oppression and hardship of Kufr he believed in, the traditions and the ways of his forefathers prevented him on this occasion from becoming Muslim. Even though Islam had entered his heart, his mind and body could not be tempted away from the call of the Jahiliyyah. He was enraged that a man of great strength, dignity and repute, in the form of Hamza could give-up his Deen so easily and accept the call of Muhammad (saw). Umar, being of great strength himself, thus became blinded with the hatred of the success of Muhammad (saw) and felt that he needed to give complete support to the Quraysh against this man.

Imaam Qurtubi and Imaam Alousi narrate that on one occasion, Umar Bin Al-Khattab left his home hearing that Hamza had challenged the Quraysh to fight him. Umar thought to himself, *"If this man challenges us because he believes in Muhammad, (instead of dealing with him) I will deal with Muhammad myself."* Nu'aym Bin Abdullah Al-Adawi saw Umar and said to him, *"Where are you going carrying that sword, O Umar?"* Umar replied, *"I am going to kill Muhammad."* Nu'aym replied, *"But how*

¹⁰⁸ Al-Qur'an – Surah Al-Haaqqah, 69:43

are you going to protect yourself from Banu Hashem and from Banu Zuhra." Umar replied, "What are you talking about? Have you become like them and left the Deen of your forefathers? I will fight all of them including Hamza." Nu'aym said, "Let me then tell you something that will surprise you. Your own sister and your brother-in-law have become Sabi (deviants, fundamentalists) and have left your Deen, that you wish to fight for."

Umar became enraged and struck Nu'aym and rushed to his sister's house. There, Khabbab Ibnu Arrat was reciting from a small page of the Qur'an with Umar's sister Fatima as well as her husband, Sa'id Ibn Zayd. Hearing the commotion inside, Umar hid himself outside Fatima's house and listened. Suddenly, he burst into the house and shouted, *"What is the sound that I heard from this house?"* Fatima hid the paper and their guest Khabbab and said, *"It was nothing. Just the murmurings of conversation."* Umar said, *"Have you become a Sabi' (deviant) and left the Deen of your forefathers?"* His sister replied, *"You always used to say that you want to be on the correct Deen. What if the Deen I accepted is the truth?"* Umar replied, *"How dare you say that."* With this he jumped onto his sister and slapped her. Her husband, Sa'id then rose and attempted to punch Umar Bin Al-Khattab. However, Umar Bin Khattab managed to get above Sa'id and began to punch him repeatedly. Fatima, in protection of her husband, tried to push Umar bin-Khattab off of him. However, Umar pushed her and she fell and hit her face and bled profusely. She then shouted, *"O Umar! What if the truth is not in your Deen? I proclaim that there is no god but Allah and Muhammad (saw) is his Messenger. Kill me if you want to kill me."*

Umar stood still and was deeply moved by what his sister had said and what he had done to her. He looked at her and said, *"Give me this page you were reading."* Fatima replied, *"But you are impure. The Qur'an can only be touched by the pure. Go and wash yourself."* Umar washed himself, took the piece of paper and began to read the verses of the Qur'an,

اقْتَرَبَ لِلنَّاسِ حِسَابُهُمْ وَهُمْ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مَّعْرُضُونَ لَا مَا يَأتِيهِمْ مِّن ذِكْرٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ
 مُّحَدَّثٍ إِلَّا اسْتَمَعُوهُ وَهُمْ يَلْعَبُونَ لَا لَاهِيَةً قُلُوبُهُمْ وَأَسْرُوا النَّجْوَى الَّذِينَ
 ظَلَمُوا هَلْ هَذَا إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ أَفَتَأْتُونَ السَّحَرَ وَأَنْتُمْ تَبْصِرُونَ لَا قَالَ رَبِّي يَعْلَمُ
 الْقَوْلَ فِي السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ لَا بَلْ قَالُوا أَضْغَاتُ أَحْلَامٍ بَلْ
 افْتَرَاهُ بَلْ هُوَ شَاعِرٌ فَلْيَأْتِنَا بآيَةٍ كَمَا أُرْسِلَ الْأَوَّلُونَ لَا مَا آمَنَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ مِّن قَرْيَةٍ
 أَهْلَكْنَاهَا أَفَهُمْ يُؤْمِنُونَ لَا وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا قَبْلَكَ إِلَّا رِجَالًا نُّوحِي إِلَيْهِمْ فَاسْأَلُوا
 أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ لَا وَمَا جَعَلْنَاهُمْ جَسَدًا لَّا يَأْكُلُونَ الطَّعَامَ وَمَا
 كَانُوا خَالِدِينَ لَا ثُمَّ صَدَقْنَاهُمُ الْوَعْدَ فَأَنْجَيْنَاهُمْ وَمَنْ نَّشَاءُ وَأَهْلَكْنَا الْمُسْرِفِينَ
 لَا لَقَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ كِتَابًا فِيهِ ذِكْرُكُمْ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ لَا وَكَمْ قَصَمْنَا مِن قَرْيَةٍ
 كَانَتْ ظَالِمَةً وَأَنْشَأْنَا بَعْدَهَا قَوْمًا آخَرِينَ لَا فَلَمَّا أَحْسَسُوا بِأَسْنَا إِذَا هُمْ مِنْهَا
 يَرْكُضُونَ لَا تَرْكُضُوا وَارْجِعُوا إِلَى مَا أُتْرِفْتُمْ فِيهِ وَمَسَاكِنِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُسْأَلُونَ
 لَا قَالُوا يَا وَيْلَنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا ظَالِمِينَ

"Ta-Ha. We have not sent down the Qur'an unto you (O Muhammad) to cause you distress. But as a Reminder to those who fear (Allah). A revelation from Him (Allah) who has created the earth and high heavens. The Most Gracious (Allah) rose over the (Mighty) Throne (in a manner that suits His Majesty). To him belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth, and all that is between them, and all that is under the soil. And if you (O Muhammad) speak aloud, then verily He knows the secret and that which is yet more hidden. Allah! There is none except He. To Him belongs the Best Names. And has there come to you the story of Musa (as)? When he saw a fire, he said to his family: 'Wait! Verily I have seen a fire, perhaps I can bring you some burning brand

*therefrom, or find some guidance at the fire.' And when he came to it he was called by name: 'O Musa! Verily I am your Lord! So take off your shoes; you are in the sacred valley, Tuwa. And I have chosen you. So listen to that which will be revealed. Verily, I am Allah! None has the right to be worshiped but I, so worship Me, and perform As-Salat for my Remembrance.'"*¹⁰⁹

Umar immediately said, *"What beautiful words, tell me where Muhammad is."* When Khabbab Ibnu Arrat heard Umar say those words, he revealed himself from behind the curtains where he was hiding. As Umar was leaving the house, Khabbab began to shout, *"Umar, let me give you some good news,"* he continued, *"I hope the Du'a of Muhammad has been fulfilled. The Du'a made about you, on Thursday night when he (saw) said 'O Allah give victory to Islam by either Umar or Abu Jahl Ibn Hisham.' And you are one of the two Umar's. Perhaps you may fulfil this Du'a? The Prophet is in the Dar (Al-Arqam) near As-Safa."*

Umar drew his sword as he approached the door of Al-Arqam. On hearing the knocking, a messenger looked from the door and caught sight of the sword strapped around the chest of Umar. He immediately informed Muhammad (saw) what he had seen. The Muslims gathered together pondering what his intentions were. Hamza said, *"What has happened,"* they replied, *"It is Umar,"* Hamza said *"I am waiting for him, open the door. If he wants to come here for a good reason then we will offer something good to him, but if he wants to come here for something bad, then I will kill him with his own sword."*

The Prophet (saw) said to Hamza, *"Be at ease Hamza! Open the door for him. I have been told that Umar has come for a good reason."* They opened the door and Umar entered the room. The Prophet (saw) went up to Umar until they were face to face. Suddenly he grabbed Umar's chest

¹⁰⁹ Al-Qur'an – Surah Ta-Ha, 20:1-14

by his clothes and pulled him towards himself until his own hand was over the sword of Umar's. The Prophet (saw) then shook him hard twice and said, *"Is it not time for you to stop all your evil actions, before Allah (swt) descends upon you a calamity and torment, as He did upon Al-Waleed Ibn al-Mughirah?"* He continued, *"O Allah! Dignify this Deen with Umar Al-Khattab, O Allah! Let Umar become Muslim."* Before Muhammad (saw) could finish his Du'a, Umar began to say, *"I bear witness there is no God but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad (saw) is his Messenger."*

All the Muslims inside the House made *Takbeer*¹¹⁰ until people in and around Makkah could hear their voices. News spread throughout Makkah that the Muslims were planning an attack on Quraysh as such a loud Takbeer was normally associated with a declaration of war. Nobody knew exactly what was happening. The Quraysh finally received the news that the Muslims were shouting from Dar Al-Arqam, it was a surprise for them, as the exact whereabouts of the meeting place for the Muslims was not known by anyone outside of the Prophet and his companions. When the news that Umar Al-Khattab had embraced Islam was received, it left a bitter taste in the mouths of the Quraysh.

The Takbeer was an historic landmark for the Muslims marking the beginning of their uprising against the oppression that the Quraysh had inflicted upon them. Within a few months two leading members of the Quraysh had departed from them and converted to Islam. It sent a shock wave throughout the whole of Makkah and the Arab peninsula. As the message spread, it rocked the very foundations that the Quraysh were based upon. Umar and Hamza represented and symbolised the might and force of the Quraysh, behind all the words and torturing that they had caused. The Quraysh had to re-evaluate their position and

¹¹⁰ *Takbeer* – Declaration usually exclaimed aloud that Allah (swt) is the Greatest

stance against Muslims, now that they had gathered new influence in Makkah.

Umar (ra) recalled when he became Muslim, *"I was one of the people of strength at that time. I had more animosity towards Muhammad (saw) than anyone else because he had some strong people (Hamza) with him. But when I embraced Islam, I knocked on Abu Jahl's door who came out and said to me, 'Welcome O Umar, what have you come to me to say.' I said to him 'I have come to tell you that I believe in Allah and his Messenger, I believe in all that He says. Woe be upon anyone who touches him again.' He (Abu Jahl) slammed the door in my face and replied to me, 'Curse be on you and your face! You came here to tell me that!' After that I went out and said, 'O people of Makkah, let the present inform the absent that I Umar Bin Al-Khattab have embraced Islam. Whoever wishes to fight (the Muslims), or wishes their wife to be a widow or their children to become orphans then meet me and I am ready for him.' After repeating this bold statement three times to the people of Makkah, he went back to his home.*

The Quraysh were disgusted by Umar's conversion to Islam and felt that they had to retaliate in some form to gain some respect from the people of Makkah. They gathered together around the house of Umar, but no one was able to enter. They went to Al-Arse Bin Wa'il As-Sahero Al-Amr who told them, *"Whoever wishes to meet Umar has been told to meet him in the valley."* The people became amazed and said, *"(What?) He wants to meet us all?"* and Arse bin Wa'il replied, *"He is ready!"*

So the people of Quraysh went to the valley to meet Umar. Having found him alone, they surprised him when all twenty of them began to fight him at the same time. Umar tried to hit them as much as he could, but was eventually overpowered and had several blows inflicted to his body. Eventually, to prevent further injury, Umar's family had to intervene separating them. However, during the fight Umar was able to

remove both eyes of Utbah, the son of Abu Lahab, and while he did this he said, *"That is for what you did to the daughter of Muhammad (saw)."*

Mujahid reported from Ibn Abbas that once he asked Umar Al-Khattab, *"Why have you been called Al-Farouq?"* He said, *"Hamza embraced Islam only three days before me. Hamza told me that he was waiting for me (to embrace Islam), until Allah (swt) guided him only three days prior. And he told me how he became Muslim. Then he told me at the end that he said to the Prophet (saw) 'Are we on the Haqq (the Truth), and if we die, we die on the Haqq and if we live, we live on the Haqq.' Muhammad (saw) said 'Yes, by the One in whose hand lies my soul, you are on the right path whether you die now or you live now, you are on the Haqq.' He said 'if that is the case why do we need to hide ourselves? Why do we need to stay back? By the one who sent you the Haqq let us come out and we will go out.' The Prophet (saw) said 'Let us go out.' And we went out together in two lines (i.e. a demonstration). Hamza in front of one line and I was in front of the second one. We came outside shouting all together 'Takbeer' until we entered to the Mosque (Ka'bah). The Quraysh looked at us and saw me and Hamza and they looked so depressed. At that time Muhammad (saw) said to me, 'Al-Farouq you go in that direction (taking the line of demonstrators)' and he said to Hamza 'you go in that direction' and from that day he called me Al-Farouq."*

Ibn Masoud (ra) said, *"We were not able to pray in the Ka'bah. Only the Prophet would go and pray there. Instead, we used to pray in a hidden place until Umar embraced Islam and from that day the Prophet said to us 'Pray as much as you like in the Ka'bah.'"*

Shoaib Bin Serad Ar-Rumi said, *"When Umar embraced Islam I could see that we were able to speak out openly and firmly. And he called for that publicly; we would sit around the Ka'bah publicly and made circles there. We made Tawaaf around the Ka'bah publicly, whereas we were unable to do that before, we could only do it secretly. Anyone who was harsh with us before was now softer with us. We even returned some of the insults which people threw at*

us following Hamza and Umar's conversion. The humiliation stopped when Umar embraced Islam."

When Umar and Hamza embraced Islam it marked a turning point for the Messenger (saw) and his call. They became the protectors of Muhammad (saw) and his companions like his uncle Abu Taalib had provided. It, for the first time, allowed the Muslims to call all people to Islam publicly and collectively without any fear.

The Quraysh fall in Prostration to Allah (swt)

In Ramadan of the same year, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) went out to Al-Haraam in Makkah, where there was a large gathering amongst the leaders and noble people of the Quraysh. The Prophet (saw) stood up in the middle of the gathering and began to recite Surah Najm¹¹¹ aloud so that all could hear.

This type of address was unprecedented since it disrupted the Quraysh's meeting whilst also embarrassing them publicly. As Muhammad (saw) continued to recite the Qur'an, some from amongst the Quraysh began to look at each other saying, *"Do not listen to him! Do not bother about him!"* Others planned to talk aloud to interrupt the flow of Muhammad (saw). Allah (swt) responded to them immediately by sending down Ayat during the recitation of al-Najm. Muhammad (saw) began to recite *"and those who disbelieve say: 'listen not to the Qur'an and make noise to disrupt him'"*¹¹². The non-believers were stunned by this, as it had addressed their, as yet, unacted out plans and they were amazed as to how Muhammad (saw) knew what their intentions had been. In their arrogance not to demonstrate the truth of the revelations, they left their plans and stopped disrupting the recitation.

¹¹¹ Al-Qur'an – Surah An-Najm, 53:1-62

¹¹² Al-Qur'an – Surah Al-Fussilat, 41:26

Muhammad (saw) continued to recite Surah Al-Najm until he came towards the end, where the Ayat provided a harsh warning and reality about the Day of Resurrection. The melodious nature and meaning of the Qur'an entranced all those present, captivating them until the last Ayat was recited, *"So fall you down in prostration (make sujood) to Allah (swt) and worship Him."* Immediately the Prophet (saw) prostrated, placing his (saw) forehead down onto the ground. In this tense atmosphere, and seeing Muhammad (saw) prostrate, the Qurayshi leaders and noblemen could not control their bodies. All of them suddenly made Sujood in unison to Allah (swt) as reported in Saheeh Bukhari¹¹³. The Prophet had stolen their hearts throughout the recitation of the whole of the Surah and they listened attentively until the end of the Surah. When the verses regarding the details of the Day of Judgement were recited they were in a state of complete shock and when it was said, *"Make Sajdah"* all of those present obeyed him (saw) and fell down in prostration with him (saw).

Immediately after making Sajdah to Allah (swt), the Quraysh realized what they had just done. They realised the seriousness of their actions, which were witnessed by a large proportion of the inhabitants of Makkah. Word spread throughout Makkah and throughout the far reaches of the Arabian Peninsula that the Quraysh had all embraced the Deen of Muhammad (saw).

The news reached the ears of the Muslims in Abyssinia too. Coupled with the fact that Umar bin Al-Khattab had recently entered Islam, the Muslims in Abyssinia became jubilant, thinking and believing that all of the oppression that they had faced in Makkah was now over. They made plans and returned almost immediately to their homeland. As they entered Makkah they did so in secrecy at the dead of night in fear

¹¹³ Abdullah ibn Abbas narrates, *"The Prophet (saw) prostrated while reciting an-Najm and with him prostrated the Muslims, the pagans, the Jinns, and all human*

that the Quraysh may catch them as it was a crime for any residents to leave the vicinity of Makkah without first taking permission. However, upon their return, they discovered that the Quraysh had not in fact embraced Islam; rather they had momentarily inclined towards it.

Quraysh Spread Lies and Propaganda

In order to justify their actions and to counter the news that was spreading all over the Arab world, the Quraysh conjured up a story claiming that the Prophet (saw) had praised their idols instead. They distorted the ayats,

أَفَرَأَيْتُمُ اللَّاتَ وَالْعُزَّىٰ ۚ وَمَنَاةَ الثَّالِثَةَ الْأُخْرَىٰ ۚ أَلَكُمُ الذَّكَرُ وَلَهُ الْأُنثَىٰ ۚ
تِلْكَ إِذَا قِسْمَةٌ ضِيزَىٰ

*“Have ye seen Lat and Uzzah. And another, the third,
Manaah? What! For you the male sex, and for Him, the
female? Behold, such would be indeed a division most unfair!
These are nothing but names which ye have devised, ye and
your fathers, for which God has sent down no authority
(whatever).”¹¹⁴*

They claimed instead that they heard, *“These beautiful idols which are noble (Al-Lat, Al -Uzzah Al-Manaah), their intercession is required, they should be respected, obeyed and we should make Sujood to them. May Allah accept our call.”* All of the Quraysh gave an oath claiming that this is what they heard and they attributed the distorted Ayah to the Prophet (saw). Muhammad (saw) said in return, *“Verily that (which they say) is what the devil has whispered to them.”*

beings.” [Bukhari]

¹¹⁴ Al-Qur'an – Surah An-Najm, 53:19-22

During this time the persecution and torture by the Quraysh continued incessantly. The Prophet (saw) recommended that the Muslims make a second Hijra and return back to Abyssinia. The first Hijra took place in the 5th year and the Muslims stayed there only for a few months. The second Hijra occurred towards the end of the 5th year and at the beginning of the 6th. This time it would be harder for the Muslims to accomplish the Hijrah safely, since the Quraysh were now aware of their plans in advance.

The Quraysh surrounded all the exits of Makkah, hoping to intercept the Muslims if they tried to leave. But, by the Grace of Allah (swt), the Muslims were able to smuggle themselves through the Qurayshi lines and make the journey safely to Abyssinia once again. This time a greater number of Muslims undertook the journey to Abyssinia to avoid the torture. It is reported that approximately 83 men and 8 women undertook the migration. Amongst them, some took their entire families, Muslim and non-Muslim, in the hope that those who had yet to convert would do so at a later date.

The Quraysh were infuriated that these Muslims were able to go freely to a neighbouring country with whom they had political and economic ties and were able to find a land in which they could openly preach their belief, propagate their ideas and at the same time live without fear of persecution. They thus decided to pursue them once again on their way to Abyssinia and tried in vain to arrest them before they could reach their final destination.

The Boycott

It is reported by Imaam Naysaburi, that within three to four weeks of Umar (ra) embracing Islam the Mushriks within the tribe of Banu Hashim and Banu Muttalib gathered together and made a covenant to protect Muhammad (saw). This covenant was their word to endure any hardship, pain or suffering to protect Muhammad's (saw) life. This action left the Quraysh confused about what to do, since they realized that now, if they killed the Prophet (saw), tribal unrest would ensue; ultimately leading to much bloodshed between the various tribes and factions.

The Quraysh decided to gather together at the cave of Bani Qunana to discuss what action they were to undertake against Muhammad (saw) and his new found supporters. Here they ultimately forged an alliance of tribes against Banu Hashim and Banu Muttalib agreeing upon a treaty to which they all swore. The treaty stated that the people of Makkah were not allowed to marry from Banu Hashim and Banu Muttalib, they must not support them nor sit with them, talk, socialise, eat or drink with them, and they must be treated as if they had camel disease¹¹⁵. The final point to that which they agreed was that there would never be any reconciliation between themselves and Banu Hashim and Banu Muttalib until they surrender Muhammad (saw) for punishment. The covenant of the boycott was kept inside the Ka'bah and a summary was pinned to the outer wall so that it could be read as a reminder to all the people of Makkah.

It is reported by Imaam Bukhari that the person who transcribed the treaty was Baghid bin Aamir bin Hashim. The Prophet Muhammad (saw) supplicated, *"O Allah! Remove his hand! O Allah! Dismantle his hand! O Allah! Destroy his hand!"* Following this Du'a, Baghid bin Aamir's hand became paralysed, not allowing him to write any more. Thus, as a result of this covenant, in the seventh year of Prophethood, both the Muslims and the Mushriks of the tribes of Banu Hashim and Banu Muttalib, except for Abu Lahab, were driven out of Makkah; forced to the hills on the outskirts of the city, away from normal society. Despite the fact that not all of Banu Hashim and Banu Muttalib were Muslims, the mere fact that they sided with the Believers left them to be isolated and boycotted as well. Yet, despite the inevitable suffering they were to endure, they stood firm and continued on their principles, being left as prisoners away from society. Much can be learnt from this action, especially for those cowardly and feeble Kufr leaders of Muslim countries, who at the slightest hint of American displeasure, jump on the bandwagon of the *"War against Terror"* killing many thousands of innocent Muslims in order to safeguard their own economic benefits.

Life under the Boycott

It is mentioned by Imaam Bayhaki that the boycott against the Believers and their allies was so severe and intense that even water and food were restricted to them. The Quraysh would purchase all the food that entered Makkah, stopping each and every businessmen, warning them against selling their goods to the Muslims. It is also reported by Saheeh Muslim that the Quraysh would often buy all that the businessmen would bring in order to prevent any goods being left for the Muslims.

Thus, the Muslims had to find different means of obtaining their provisions. Hakim bin Hisham was the nephew of Khadijah (ra).

¹¹⁵ *'To be treated like camel disease'* – A famous Arab saying implying complete and total avoidance of a people until they are cured of their situation

Despite not being of Banu Hashim nor of Banu Muttalib, he felt disheartened at the way his auntie was being treated as a result of the boycott and decided to try and smuggle some food and other basic necessities to her. Once, he was carrying some wheat to take to his aunt Khadijah when Abu Jahl spotted him and seized it all. Upon seeing this, another elder called Abu Baktari intervened saying, *"You can prevent Hakim from going, but you cannot take his property."* Abu Jahl unwillingly returned the goods. However, despite this treatment Hakim continued to persevere in smuggling much food to his aunt Khadijah.

During the period of the boycott, Abu Taalib used to constantly fear for the safety of his nephew Muhammad (saw) and would say to him, *"Do not sleep in your sleeping place; take mine (instead)."* He exchanged his sleeping place so that if anyone from the Quraysh or Banu Hashim wanted to assassinate Muhammad (saw) they would not be able to.

The boycott eventually became so intense that in order for the Muslims to survive they were left to eat only the leaves of trees and the skins of animals; meant for making clothes, socks and slippers. People began to hear their children's incessant crying with hunger pains; yet there was to be no food to give except for the very little smuggled to them. The Muslims were not allowed to leave the hill except during the sacred month, when they were allowed to visit Makkah. What little money they had would be used to buy some livestock that arrived in Makkah from other markets during the Hajj season. However, during this month, the Quraysh would bid twice or thrice the price of the worth of the cattle ensuring that none would be left for the Muslims to purchase.

Despite the social, economic and psychological impact that the boycott had left upon the Muslims, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) would still go out during this month to meet the people and call them towards Islam; enduring all the subsequent ridicule, slander and malign as he (saw) had experienced before the boycott.

The Quraysh effectively wanted to isolate Muhammad (saw) from the rest of society so that his da'wah would be confined to only himself and his followers and thus would never reach the masses. Their plan in terms of the boycott was to strike fear in peoples hearts so that they would not approach Muhammad (saw) to learn about Islam, in fear that they would be oppressed, castigated and included in the boycott. The boycott was not only about breaking ties and communications with Muhammad (saw), it was about making sure that the Muslims and their supporters would not have any access to food, hoping that this would eventually lead them to reject their faith through starvation and ill-health.

The End of the Boycott

Three complete years passed and the boycott was still in full effect. In the tenth year of Prophethood, the people could no longer bear to watch Bani Hashim and Bani Muttalib face this extreme oppression and torture. It is reported in Ibn Hisham that the Quraysh themselves began to suffer economically from the boycott. Losing much potential customers for their own goods as well as the attraction of drawing foreign trade to Makkah. Some of the Makkans felt embarrassed when foreigners who entered Makkah mocked them saying, *"Instead of providing protection for your own people, you imprison them in their own homeland!"*

The Quraysh began to witness an increase in the voices of dissent against the boycott. Hisham Bin Ammr Bin Luay, from the tribe of Bani Amr, was instrumental in leading the campaign against the boycott. Being distantly related to Banu Hashim he would often smuggle food to them during the night when it was extremely scarce. Hisham's mother, Artica Bin Abi Muttalib would often say to her son, *"O Hisham! Do you wish to eat and drink while your aunts and uncles are unable to?"* He replied, *"What can I do? I am only a single man!"* he continued, *"By God! If another man was in support of me - I would abolish this agreement!"* At this instant, a

man called Zuhair said to Hisham, *"Indeed you have found that man!"* Hisham confused replied, *"Who?"* Zuhair said, *"Me!"* But Hisham continued, *"I need more support so that I can abolish this boycott."*

After this conversation they both went to Mutla Ibn Abdul Addi and Zuhair said to him, *"You are a man who has blood relationships with Bani Hashim and Bani Muttalib through your marriage and you are of the descendants of Abdul Manaaf. How can you agree with what is happening to them? Is this not pure oppression?"* He said, *"Woe unto you! I am only one man. I need a second person with me."* Zuhair replied, *"But you have that (support) – it is I"* Mutla responded, *"But we need a third to make a Jamaat (group),"* Zuhair said, *"I have the third in Hisham."*

Mutla answered again, *"That is not enough we need a fourth person."* So they went to Bin Hashim and repeated what they had said to Mutla and he replied, *"I am with you."* After this they went to Zumar Ibn Aswad Ibn Abdul Muttalib and reiterated their concerns. When they had formed a group of five they gathered together at Al-Hujjul and they agreed to rise and try and abolish the covenant. Zuhair said, *"I will begin - I wish to be the first one to speak."*

The next day Zuhair, wearing his finest clothes, went to the Ka'bah and joined the public gathering there. After completing seven *Tawaafs*¹¹⁶ around the Ka'bah he stood still and called, *"O people of Makkah! Do you want us to eat and adorn ourselves with clothes while Bani Hashim are starving and cannot even trade with us! They can no longer continue like this! By God! I will never stand still until the document that brings oppression (upon them) is invalidated!"* Abu Jahl, who was listening to the speech said, *"Liar! By God we will never abolish the treaty!"*

¹¹⁶ *Tawaaf* – Circumbulation; a ritual act since the time of Ibrahim (as) where a worshipper performs a circuit around the Ka'bah making supplications to Allah (swt)

This time Zumar Ibn Aswad, one of the people who agreed to end the boycotting shouted, *"By God! You are the Liar! We suffer because of this covenant! From the beginning we never agreed to it and we disagreed with what was written."* Abu al Bukhtari also stood up and said, *"You are right! We never agreed to what was said in it."* Mutla then stood up and said, *"Both of you are correct and whoever has said anything else he is a liar! We are free from whatever is written in it and we were never happy about what was written in it."* Hisham Ibn Amr then shouted from the other side of the gathering, *"That is correct! Indeed that is correct."*

By openly declaring the matter, they created public opinion against the actions that the Quraysh were undertaking against Bani Hashim; thus creating an atmosphere of civil disobedience and unrest. Abu Jahl responded to this, *"Verily this matter has been planned secretly. They must have consulted each other before they came here."*

Whilst this was occurring, Abu Taalib was sitting near the Ka'bah and he came to them and said that Muhammad (saw) had sent him to tell them, *"Do not dispute amongst yourselves - for the pages have already been eaten by termites. They have removed all the oppression from the pages except the name of Allah. If Muhammad (saw) is a liar we will leave him with you to do as you please. However, if he speaks the truth, return to your people and cancel this unjust boycott."* They replied, *"You speak fairly and we are happy with your offer."* They then consulted each other and chose Muta'm Ibn Adie to go inside the Ka'bah to retrieve the *Sahifah* (document). He found the document eaten by the termites except for the opening words, *"In the Name of Allah."* and wherever else Allah's (swt) name was mentioned. Muta'm came out at once showing the people what he had found and they all acknowledged that Muhammad (saw) had spoken the truth. They then gathered together and agreed unanimously to cancel the oppressive boycott. The Prophet (saw) and the Muslims were then to return from the hills, back to their homes.

The Mushriks had witnessed again, before their own eyes, a great miracle from the signs of Allah to reconfirm the Prophethood of his beloved servant. Despite the clarity of this event, Abu Jahl continued to deny and reiterated his Kufr by saying, *“Verily this is the Magic of Muhammad (saw).”* Allah (swt) then revealed the ayah,

وَإِنْ يَرَوْا آيَةً يُعْرِضُوا وَيَقُولُوا سِحْرٌ مُسْتَمِرٌّ

“And whenever we show them a miracle they turn their backs and say, ‘that is magic’”¹⁷

The Final Delegation to Abu Taalib

Now that the boycott had officially ended, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) and his companions (ra) resumed their da’wah activities as before. Despite succumbing to public pressure, the Quraysh did not relent in their abuse and prevention of the Muslim’s activities. Abu Taalib continued to offer his protection to his nephew Muhammad (saw) into his eighth decade; but was now growing old and weak with the boycott draining almost all the energy he had left.

After only a few months, Ibn Ishaq quoting between two and three and Ibn Hisham saying three months, Abu Taalib fell extremely ill and entered into his deathbed. The Quraysh became very worried indeed. They felt that if they did not offer any form of reconciliation to Abu Taalib before he passed away; with all the pressure, the boycott and the suffering that they had made him endure, their reputation would be dealt a severe blow amongst the rest of the Arabs by his death.

The Quraysh visited Abu Taalib and said, *“We would like to meet you in order to offer you something that we have not offered previously.”* Ibn Ishaq mentioned that the Quraysh were aware about Abu Taalib’s sickness and that, when he was entered his deathbed, they said to each other,

"Now that Hamza and Omar have embraced Islam and the affairs of the Muslims have spread everywhere, so much so that even those outside Makkah speak about him, let us go to Abu Taalib and request him to stop his nephew from attacking our way of life and we will offer him whatever he wishes. If this old man were to pass away, the Arab tribes will ridicule us saying that we left him to die without reconciling with him. If we kill his nephew after he dies they will call us cowards. As, when his uncle was alive, we did not kill him, but when he passed away we killed him. Therefore let us go and speak with him."

From amongst them they chose Utbah Bin Rabi'ah, Sheeba Bin Rabi'ah, Abu Jahl Bin Hisham, Umayya Bin Khalaf, Abu Sufyan Bin Harb along with a group of 25 noblemen. Their spokesman began, *"O Abu Taalib! You know how we respect you and you also know why we are coming to you. We have visited you with this (matter) many times. You are in full knowledge of what has happened between your nephew and ourselves. Call him and act as an arbitrator between us. Take whatever you want from us and give up whatever rights you owe us. If he stop's attacking our way of life, we will stop attacking his. What is your opinion on this?"*

Abu Taalib called his nephew and said, *"O my nephew! These are the nobles who are gathered here. This time they bring you something, which they have never offered before. They will leave you to do whatever you want to do; you can call to your Deen, pray and do all the good deeds. But you must stop attacking them, and their way of life. If you do this, they will then never address your Deen and they will stop attacking you. You will never address their Deen and their way of life, nor will you address their traditions and their idols. What do you think?"*

The Prophet Muhammad (saw) said to them, *"Listen to me! I offer you only one word, if you say it you will control both the Arab and the non-Arab (people)."* The noblemen looked at each other in confusion, not knowing what the word was nor how saying it could give them so great a power

¹¹⁷ Al-Qur'an – Surah Al-Qamar, 54:2

and influence over both the Arabs and the non -Arabs. Abu Jahl said to him, "Just tell us what that word is. By God! By my fore-fathers and my family I will give you in offer ten equivalent words!"

Muhammad (saw) said to them, "Say, 'I bear witness that there is no god but Allah. Give up all that you worship and all your idols.'" Upon hearing this, the Quraysh began to kick up a fuss, clapping their hands and saying, "O Muhammad (saw)! Do you want us to make all those gods One God? That is (surely) something incredible!" They turned to each other and said, "Verily, he will never concede! He has never conceded since he started with this cause. Leave him and continue on the Deen of your fathers until the verdict of God judges between you and them." The Prophet Muhammad (saw) then received revelation to recite,

ص وَالْقُرْآنِ ذِي الذِّكْرِ لَا بَلِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي عِزَّةٍ وَشِقَاقٍ لَا يَكْفُرُ أَهْلُكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مَنْ قَرُنٍ فَنَادُوا وَلَاتَ حِينَ مَنَاصٍ لَا وَاعَبِجُوا أَنْ جَاءَهُمْ مُنْذِرٌ مِنْهُمْ وَقَالَ الْكَافِرُونَ هَذَا سَاحِرٌ كَذَّابٌ لَا أَجْعَلُ الْإِلَهَةَ إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا إِنَّ هَذَا لَشَيْءٌ عُجَابٌ ...

"Saad. Verily the Qur'an is a reminder for you. The Kaafirs are showing arrogancy in dispute. See how many people before you have been destroyed. In the end they cried (for mercy) when there was no longer time for being saved! So they wonder that a Warner has come to them from among themselves! And the Unbelievers say, 'This is a sorcerer telling lies! Do you want to make all these gods One God! This is something strange! ...'"¹¹⁸

The arrogant stand of the Kuffar and their non-committal was not because they held something that they believed in strongly, or that they

¹¹⁸ Al-Qur'an – Surah Saad, 38:1-111

had any moral guiding principals, rather it was because they could not bring themselves to relinquish their oppression and their worldly desires. This arrogance was demonstrated when three noblemen of the Quraysh used to hide behind trees so that they each could listen to the recitation of the Qur'an. On one occasion they met each other by chance and revealed their secret to each other. They said, *'I was listening to something so beautiful! (Even though) I risked a lot by going! Yet I enjoyed it so much.'*

After their confession they arranged to go together to listen to Muhammad (saw), agreeing to keep the matter a secret only between them. Despite this, rumours spread throughout Makkah of their actions, until Abu Jahl heard about what had happened and said to one of them, *"Did you go yesterday night to the tree, and listen to him (saw)?"* He replied, *"Yes"* Abu Jahl continued, *"What did you hear?"* They replied, *"By God, we heard something that made us go there every night."* He responded, *"Listen to me! We and the noble people of Makkah had a dispute with Banu Manaaf about who should be in charge and we struggled for power, until we seized the power and they respected us by giving us food and giving us everything, we have now become the leaders over them. Until one day (recently), they came and challenged us, saying, 'We have a Prophet who receives revelation from the heavens and they want us to follow him.' Do you understand?"* He replied, *"What do you mean?"* Abu Jahl replied, *"Verily Banu Abdul Manaaf and Muhammad's only concern is to take leadership, that is why they claim he is a Prophet receiving revelation from the heavens."* They replied, *"If that is the case, then by God I will never believe in him or accept what he says."*

This clearly indicates that the Quraysh's resistance was not based on principal rather on leadership; they perceived Muhammad's call as a threat to their position in Government. Rather than rationally contemplating the arguments that Muhammad proposed, they would reject it and all of its truth on the grounds that they would lose their

positions and pride in the eyes of the Makkans. Abu Jahl once said to Muhammad (saw), “I don’t claim that you are a liar. All I say is that we reject what you bring to us.” Allah (swt) revealed,

قَدْ نَعْلَمُ إِنَّهُ لَيَحْزُنُّكَ الَّذِي يَقُولُونَ فَإِنَّهُمْ لَا يُكَذِّبُونَكَ وَلَكِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ بِآيَاتِ
اللَّهِ يَجْحَدُونَ

“We know indeed the grief which their words cause you (O Muhammad (saw)): it is not you that they deny, but it is the Verses (the Qur’an) of Allah that the Zalimun (wrong doers) deny.”¹¹⁹

Allah (swt) is informing us that the Kuffar are not against Muhammad (saw) and the Sahabah *per se* because they were Muslims; rather they were rejecting and against the Deen of Allah, Islam.

Abu Taalib’s Deathbed

Abu Taalib’s sickness continued until it confined him to his bed and, nearing the end of his life, the Prophet (saw) entered his room. It is reported in Saheeh Bukhari that whilst Abu Jahl and Abdullah Ibn Umayyah were beside Abu Taalib, Muhammad (saw) said, “O my uncle! Say ‘There is no God except Allah.’ Say these words and I will defend you in front of Almighty Allah.” Abu Jahl said, “O Abu Taalib! How dare you refrain from the Deen of Abdul Muttalib” reminding Abu Taalib of the Deen of his father and his grandfather. He continued like this until Abu Jahl said, “Just say one word, ‘I am on the Deen of Abu Muttalib.’” The Prophet (saw) said, “I will (continue to) ask Allah (swt) to forgive you as long as he permits me to.” The Prophet (saw) then left the presence of his uncle and soon after this Abu Taalib passed away. Allah (swt) then revealed,

¹¹⁹ Al-Qur’an – Surah Al-An’am, 6:33

مَا كَانَ لِلنَّبِيِّ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْ يَسْتَغْفِرُوا لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ وَلَوْ كَانُوا أُولِي قُرْبَى مِنْ
بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُمْ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ

*"It is not (proper) for the Prophet and those who believe to ask Allah Forgiveness for the Mushrikun (pagans, idolaters), even though they be of kin, after it has become clear to them that they are the dwellers of the Fire (because they died non-believers)."*¹²⁰

He also revealed in response to this,

إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ

*"Verily, you (O Muhammad (saw)) guide not whom you like, but Allah guides whom He wills. And He knows best those who are guided."*¹²¹

Indeed, Abu Taalib was the shield by which the Muslims were protected from many of the attacks of the people of Jahiliyyah. However, the fact remained that Abu Taalib remained on the Deen of his forefathers and so will never enter paradise. It is reported in Saheeh Muslim and Bukhari that once Abbas Ibn Muttalib said to the Prophet, "You did not help your uncle much as he used to protect you. What did you do for him?" The Prophet (saw) responded, "I cannot do any more for him! He is in the shallowest (part of) hellfire otherwise he would have been in the deepest depths of it. Only because of me and that he used to support the da'wah." Despite all that Abu Taalib had offered the Messenger Muhammad (saw), we should not become emotional; the fact of the

¹²⁰ Al-Qur'an – Surah At-Tauba, 9:113

¹²¹ Al-Qur'an – Surah Al-Qassas, 28:56

matter is that he did not embrace Islam and thus will have to pay accordingly¹²².

It is reported that Abu Taalib's sickness lasted for 3 months until Rajab in the 10th year of Prophethood, only 6 months after the Muslims were released from the boycott, when he passed away. Only 2 months later, in Ramadhan, the Prophet's (saw) wife Khadijah (ra), also passed away at the age of 65. The Prophet, during this turbulent time, was in his fifties. Khadijah had been a blessing to Muhammad (saw). She shared 25 years with him, caring and looking after him in the time when they both faced extreme hardship and torture from the Quraysh. She also stood with him through the early years when Muhammad (saw) first received revelation and when he thought that the devil had possessed him. She also helped convey his message amongst the Makkans against all accusations and slandering. This is why the Prophet (saw) said about her (ra), *"May Allah bless Khadijah. She believed in me when people declared Kufr in me, she accepted my word when the people rejected it and she shared her wealth with me when people prevented me any wealth, Allah granted me through her a boy, while Allah prevented me a boy from any other wife."*

It is also reported in Saheeh Bukhari and Muslim by Abu Hurayrah that the Prophet said that Jibrael (as) came to him and said, *"O Prophet! This is Khadijah coming to you with a plate full of food. When she reaches you, inform her that Allah (swt) sends His greetings to her and say to her that Allah has chosen for her a beautiful palace in Paradise wherein there will be no clamour nor any hardship whatsoever."*

Verily the death of his uncle Abu Taalib, and the death of his wife Khadijah, would have been very painful for the Prophet, there was only

¹²² It is narrated by Abdullah ibn Abbas, "The Prophet of Allah (saw) said, 'Among the inhabitants of the Fire Abu Taalib would have the least suffering, and he would be wearing two shoes (of Fire) which would boil his brain.'" [Muslim]

sixty days between the two events. These events, which occurred in quick succession, saddened Muhammad (saw) greatly and his loss caused him to have a weighty heart. On top of all these difficulties, the Makkan people began to mount obstacle after obstacle which Muhammad (saw) had to deal with.

Journey to At-Ta'if

After the Prophet's (saw) uncle passed away, the people intensified their attacks and confronted Muhammad daily, attacking him physically with the intention of ultimately killing him. The people constantly slandered him, mainly originating from tribes regarded lower than his own. At the same time, the leaders of each tribe plucked up their courage since Abu Taalib was now dead and separated the Muslims within their own tribes from the Muslims of other tribes.

Ibn Ishaq reported that after Abu Taalib passed away, the Quraysh attacked Muhammad severely and slandered and abused him with an intensity that they were unable to before his uncle's death. The people entered Muhammad's home and threw sand onto his head, one of his daughters came and washed his body and began to cry. The Prophet (saw) said to his daughter *"O my daughter do not cry. O my daughter do not cry. Verily, Allah (swt) will protect your father."* And Muhammad (saw) would announce publicly, *"Quraysh did not hurt me until my uncle passed away"*. The slandering continued for a whole year, which the Prophet called the *'Year of Sadness.'*

In the month of Shawwal of year 10, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) married Sawdda bint Zum'ah who was amongst those who embraced Islam and returned from the second Hijrah after her husband, As Sakran Ibn Amr, died in Abyssinia. She was the first wife of the Messenger after Khadijah had passed away. In the same month of the same year, (619CE), the Prophet Muhammad (saw) went to At-Ta'if, which was about 60 miles from Makkah, hoping to gain some new

converts and a place of sanctuary for the Believers. Zayd Ibnu Haritha used to assist him on the long journey by foot.

On his way to Ta'if, as Muhammad (saw) passed the numerous tribes, he called them to Islam, however, they never responded to him. In At-Ta'if, Muhammad (saw) met three brothers who were amongst the leaders of Ta'if, Mas'oud, Habeeb and Abdu-Elaail, sons of Amru Bin Umary As-Sakafee, and spoke to them and called them to Allah and to support Islam. Whilst addressing them, one was cutting his clothes; he said to the Prophet (saw) sarcastically, *"If Allah has sent you we will support you."* Another replied, *"Did Allah not find anyone except you to send?"* The third one carried on, *"I will never speak with you! For if you are a Messenger then you are too dangerous for me to address. If you are a liar then I shall have nothing to do with you."* The Prophet Muhammad (saw) left them and said, *"You have said what you said in private. Please do not inform the people about me."*

He then went to Ahl-Ta'if (the people of Ta'if) and remained with them for a period of 10 days. He kept speaking with the nobles and influential people, until there was nobody left for him to visit. Having rejected his (saw) call they told him, *"Leave our lands."* They sent their children and insane folk to hurl stones at the Messenger to drive him out. Even the slaves of the people would swear and abuse the Messenger Muhammad (saw) as he walked by. The Prophet was pelted and attacked with such ferocity that his slippers dripped with the blood from the injuries sustained all over his face and body. Zaid bin Harith tried in vain to shield Muhammad (saw) as much as he could until he himself received numerous cuts and gashes to his head.

They chased Muhammad (saw) until the Prophet and Zaid left the confines of At-Ta'if and reached the gardens of Utbah and Sheyab the sons of Rabi'ah about 3 miles away. They rested against a grape tree. Muhammad (saw) raised his hands and made Du'a to Allah, his heart

full of sadness saying, *"O my Lord! To You I turn to for my weaknesses and the shortcomings of my ways, being ridiculed by the people. O Ar-Rahman, you are the Lord of the weak, you are my Lord. To whom do you leave my affairs, an enemy who is in charge over my affairs? O my Lord! if you are not angry with me, I do not mind. I seek your refuge and Mercy. I ask you by the Nur of your 'Wajh' which extinguishes all of the darkness and brings it to light, and through which all the affairs of the earth have been settled, I ask you not to send your Anger and punishment to me. I will continue to call until you are satisfied. Verily there is no strength or power except from You."*

When the two sons of Rabi'ah saw Muhammad (saw) in this situation, they felt some sympathy for him. They called one of their slaves Ad-Das who was a Christian man, and gave him some grapes to offer to Muhammad (saw). When Ad-Das approached Muhammad (saw) and gave him the grapes to eat, he (saw) said, *"I begin in the Name of Allah"* and then ate the grapes.

Ad-Das said, *"What you say is not the custom of the people in Arabia."* Muhammad (saw) said, *"O Ad-Das, what is your Deen? Which country are you from?"* Ad-Das said, *"I am a Christian from Dinawar."* Muhammad (saw) said, *"From Dinawar? From the village of the righteous man Yunus?"* Ad-Das said, *"Yes, what do you know about Yunus?"* Muhammad (saw) said, *"He was my brother. He was a Prophet."* Ad-Das replied, *"Are you the Prophet of Allah?"* Muhammad (saw) said, *"Indeed I am."* Ad-Das came to the hand of Muhammad (saw) and started to kiss it repeatedly.

The two sons of Rabi'ah were looking at this and Utbah said to Rabi'ah, *"Look at your servant! He has already deviated from his Deen!"* When Ad-Das returned, they said to him, *"Woe to you! What has happened to you?"* Ad-Das replied, *"O my master. There is nothing in this earth that is better than this man. He informed me about a matter nobody knows of except a Prophet."* They replied, *"Woe to you ad-Das! Woe to you to be misguided from your Deen. Your Deen is better than his Deen!"*

Rasoolullah (saw) then left this area to return to Makkah. Upon leaving, Ad-Das said to him, *"Make Du'a to Allah that he saves me from these people."* The Prophet Muhammad (saw) made Du'a for him and left. On his way out, Allah (swt) sent the Angel Jibrael and the Angel of the Mountains to Muhammad (saw).

Imaam Bukhari reported on the authority of Urwa Bin Zubair that A'iesha said that Muhammad (saw) responded when she asked him, *"Is there any day that was harder on you than the Day of Uhud."* He said, *"I faced from the people many things (hardships). The hardest thing I faced was the day of Al-Aqaba, when I was returning from At-Ta'if. I went to Ibn Amd Yalayl to ask for protection, he did not respond to me. I left and became depressed and became unconscious. When I awoke I was in an area known as Kirnu Thaalim, (today known as Kirnul Manazil, a place between Ta'if and Makkah). I looked at the sky and saw Jibrael over me. He (as) said, "Allah heard what the people said to you and what you have suffered from. Allah sends to you the Angel of the Mountain for your order, to do as you please." The King of the Mountain said to me, "Peace be on you Muhammad. If you wish I will destroy the two mountains (Abu Qabbees and Kaie Ka'an) over them". The Prophet said, "No. I wish that Allah (swt) will send out from their own backs (their offspring) those who worship Allah (swt) alone and do not associate with Him anyone."*

The reply given by Muhammad (saw) demonstrated his unique and great personality. Nobody could attain such a character. He (saw) had faced all manner of hardship, suffering and ridicule, whilst he had no power, and when given the opportunity to harm and destroy those who perpetrated these actions, he rejected, and instead asked Allah (swt) to guide their children to be better than them. The cloud of sadness that had hung over the Prophet (saw) was now removed when Jibrael offered him this option, as Muhammad (saw) was reminded that

support from the Seven Heavens was always available should he (saw) require it.

When Muhammad (saw) reached Makkah, Zaid Bin Harith said to him, *"How can we enter these precincts when the Quraysh threw us out. They may take advantage of this situation."* Muhammad (saw) replied, *"O Zaid! Allah will find a way out from any hardship. I rely fully on the help of Allah. Allah will support his Deen and will support his Prophet."* He continued until he reached Harra' (the gates of Makkah.) From here, he sent a man from Khuzaa'ah to Al-Aknas Bin Shuraik to ask him for protection. Aknas replied, *"I am already in alliance with the Quraysh. I cannot offer you protection."* He then asked Shuaib Ibn Amru for protection, they replied, *"We are the children of Aamir. We do not offer help to those who are against Bani Kaab."* He then approached Mut'am Ibn Adie, and Mut'am replied, *"Indeed. I will offer you protection."* Mut'am picked up his sword and came out to his people and said, *"(Everybody) To Arms! Come to the Ka'bah. I want to announce my protection for Muhammad."* He sent a delegation to Muhammad (saw) and invited him to the Ka'bah.

When Muhammad (saw) entered the Ka'bah, all delegations from the Quraysh were present. They were astonished as to how he (saw) was pushed to leave the area and now had returned. Mut'am raised his sword and said, *"O people of Quraysh. Do not even think that you can bring harm to the soul of Muhammad (saw). Muhammad (saw) has asked my protection."*

In the time of Jahiliyyah, when a person offered protection, he would be considered a nobleman, someone who deserved respect and obedience. Mut'am felt that since Muhammad (saw) was from a honourable tribe he had a duty to accept his need for protection. Mut'am continued, *"I protect him. Nobody should swear at him, or insult him. By no means can anyone lay a finger on him."* He then went to Muhammad (saw) and took

him to the Ka'bah and left him there to pray two Raka'hs and then he (saw) returned home.

Abu Jahl went to Mut'am and said, *"Do you only offer protection to Muhammad or do you accept him?"* Mut'am replied, *"I am only his protector, that is our custom."* Abu Jahl said, *"Fair enough. We will leave those whom you protect."*

Muhammad (saw) appreciated and acknowledged the protection offered to him by Mut'am saying at a later date, during the Battle Badr, *"If Al-Mut'am was present today and asked me to pardon those Prisoners of War, I would pardon them for him."* One of those arrested during Badr was a member of the same tribe of Mut'am Ibnu Adie, thus Muhammad (saw) was willing to return the favour offered to him by the protection of Mut'am. Following this Muhammad (saw) remained in the Wady of Nakhlah for a few days.

Abu Bakr Leaves Makkah for Abyssinia

The oppression by the Quraysh intensified against the Sahabah and in particular, they chose to attack and persecute the beloved friend of Muhammad (saw). He was consistently abused by the mushriks even though he had helped so many of them and treated them well before and after his conversion to Islam. This intensified to such an extent that Abu Bakr decided to migrate to Abyssinia to avoid the persecution.

A'iesha (ra) narrates, *"I never remembered my parents believing in any religion other than the true religion (i.e. Islam), and I don't remember a single day passing without our family being visited by Allah's Messenger (saw) in the morning and in the evening. When the Muslims were put to the test (i.e. attacked by the Mushriks), Abu Bakr prepared to migrate to the land of Ethiopia, and when he reached Bark Al-Ghimad, Ibn Ad-Daghinah, the chief of the tribe of Qarah, met him and said, "O Abu Bakr! Where are you going?" Abu Bakr replied, "My people*

have turned me out (of my country), so I want to wander on the earth and worship my Lord and I am seeking protection.” Ibn Ad-Daghinah said, “O Abu Bakr! A man like you should not leave his homeland, nor should he be driven out, because you help the destitute, earn their living, and you keep good relations with your kith and kin, help the weak and poor, entertain guests generously, and help the calamity-stricken persons. Therefore I am your protector. Go back and worship your Lord in your town.”

So Abu Bakr returned and Ibn Ad-Daghinah accompanied him. In the evening Ibn Ad-Daghinah visited the nobles of the Quraysh and said to them, *“A man like Abu Bakr should not leave his homeland, nor should he be driven out. Do you (the Quraysh) drive out a man who helps the destitute, earns their living, keeps good relations with his kith and kin, helps the weak and poor, entertains guests generously and helps the calamity-stricken persons?”* So the people of the Quraysh could not refuse Ibn Ad-Daghinah’s protection. They said to Ibn Ad-Daghinah, *“Let Abu Bakr worship his Lord in his house. He can pray and recite there whatever he likes, but he should not hurt us with it, and should not do it publicly, because we are afraid that he may affect our women and children.”* Ibn Ad-Daghinah told Abu Bakr of all that.

Abu Bakr stayed in that state, worshipping his Lord in his house. He did not pray publicly, nor did he recite the Qur’an outside his house. Then a thought occurred to Abu Bakr to build a mosque in front of his house, and there he used to pray and recite the Qur’an. The women and children of the pagans began to gather around him in great numbers. They used to wonder at him and look at him. Abu Bakr was a man who used to weep a lot; he couldn’t help weeping whilst reciting the Qur’an. That situation scared the nobles of the pagans of the Quraysh, so they sent for Ibn Ad-Daghinah.

When he came to them, they said, *“We accepted the protection of Abu Bakr on condition that he should worship his Lord in his house, but he has violated*

the conditions and he has built a mosque in front of his house where he prays and recites the Qur'an publicly. We are now afraid that he may affect our women and children unfavourably. So, prevent him from that. If he likes to confine the worship of his Lord to his house, he may do so, but if he insists on doing that openly, ask him to release you from your obligation to protect him, for we dislike to break our pact with you, but we deny Abu Bakr the right to announce his act publicly."

Ibn Ad-Daghinah went to Abu Bakr and said, "O Abu Bakr! You know well what contract I have made on your behalf; now, you are either to abide by it, or else release me from my obligation of protecting you, because I do not want the Arabs to hear that my people have dishonoured a contract I have made on behalf of another man." Abu Bakr replied, "I release you from your pact to protect me, and am pleased with the protection from Allah."

Lessons from the Boycott

Despite the hardship and intense pressures that Muhammad (saw) had to endure during the boycott, it was an ideal opportunity for the Prophet Muhammad (saw) to sit for long periods with his Sahabah culturing them and developing their Islamic personalities. In fact most of the Ayats revealed in the Makkan period addressing the previous messengers and their struggle with their own people were revealed in this time in order that the Sahabah could benefit and derive lessons from them, as Allah (swt) mentions, *"That is the narratives of the people before you in order for you to gain lessons and learn from their experiences."* Other verses, informed them of the good news that they were going to be successful over those in Makkah as well as the success they would achieve in future conquests.

Khabab Bin Arat said, 'Once I visited the Messenger Muhammad (saw) whilst he was lying down in front of the Ka'bah and we faced slander and abusive words from the Mushriks. I asked the Messenger, "Why do you not ask Allah (swt) to help you?" The Prophet Muhammad's (saw) face became red

and he sat up and said to me, "There were people before you who used to be combed with metal combs over their head until it reached the bone of their skin. They never used to give up their Deen. By God! This matter will be victorious until a person will ride from San'a to Hadaralmut, he will never fear anyone except Allah and for the wolf to eat his sheep but you are people who are not patient.'"

The good news about the future was never hidden from the people, rather when Muhammad (saw) said that the Muslims would conquer the world, this statement was made in the heart of Makkah. He said openly to the Quraysh in the heart of Makkah that the Muslims would be victorious and defeat the Quraysh. This was so that the Kuffar could hear the statements of Allah and the Muslims would learn from these Ayats and be motivated by them whilst the Kuffar would hear about them and be awestruck by them.

Whenever Al-Aswad Ibn Muttalib and his tribes saw the Prophet they would conspire against him. They would say, *"Look at him (Muhammad (saw)). The King of the earth, who wants to defeat the kings of the Persians and the King of the Romans!"* They would make fun and ridicule the Messenger (saw) whenever he made his prophecies. However, the good news about the future was a guiding force and a beacon to which the Sahabah would look in order to keep them strong in the struggle and have heart that the future was for Islam. The motivation for them was to fulfil the orders of Muhammad (saw), and besides this was the ultimate goal to please Allah (swt) and attain Paradise.

Despite all the hardship and the difficulties the Sahabah had to face, they still looked to the future and what they would eventually be rewarded with. With this, they viewed all the hardships to be like solitary clouds in the summer sky that were soon to disappear. The Prophet (saw) continued like this, building their souls (Nafs), teaching them the Qur'an, training them, making Tarbiyyah for them, purifying

their hearts, correcting their characters, liberating them from the need of money, and teaching them to control their desires. He began to establish the Deen properly in the hearts and minds of the Sahabah. Following the boycott, in Year 10, when he (saw) returned from Ta'if and stayed in Makkah, on one occasion he was praying the night prayer, Jibrael (as) came to him and said, "There is a group of Jinn (seven) who are listening to your recitation. Recite loudly." So Muhammad (saw) began to recite loudly. Allah then revealed to Muhammad (saw),

وَإِذْ صَرَفْنَا إِلَيْكَ نَفَرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقُرْآنَ فَلَمَّا حَضَرُوهُ قَالُوا أَنصِتُوا
فَلَمَّا قُضِيَ وَلَّوْا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِمْ مُنْذِرِينَ ۖ يَٰ قَالُوا يَا قَوْمَنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا كِتَابًا أُنْزِلَ مِن
بَعْدِ مُوسَىٰ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْحَقِّ وَإِلَىٰ طَرِيقٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ۚ يَٰ
قَوْمَنَا أَجِيبُوا دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ وَآمِنُوا بِهِ يَغْفِرَ لَكُم مِّن ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُجِرْكُم مِّنْ عَذَابٍ
أَلِيمٍ

*"We sent to you a group of the Jinn listening to the Qur'an. When they arrived they said, "Let us listen." When the recitation finished they returned to their family. They said, "O our people. We heard the Words and the Books that Allah sent after Musa. It confirms that what was sent before and guides people to the truth. O people! Respond to the Caller of Allah and believe in him. He will forgive your sins and will save you from Hell-fire."*¹²³

On another occasion, whilst the Prophet (saw) was praying the Night prayer in the Ka'bah, another group of Jinn (three of them) were listening to Muhammad (saw). Allah (swt) sent Jibrael to Muhammad (saw) and revealed,

¹²³ Al-Qur'an – Surah Al-Ahkaaf, 46:29-35

الْم تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْحَكِيمِ ... وَإِنْ جَاهَدَاكَ عَلَى أَنْ تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا
لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا وَصَاحِبُهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفٌ وَأَتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ
أَنَابَ إِلَيَّ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّتُكُمْ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

***“Alif. Lām. Mīm. [These letters are one of the miracles of the
Qur’ân, and none but Allâh (Alone) knows their meanings.]
These are Verses of the Wise Book (the Qur’ân)... But if they
(both) strive with you to make you join in worship with Me
others that of which you have no knowledge, then obey them
not, but behave with them in the world kindly, and follow the
path of him who turns to Me in repentance and in obedience.
Then to Me will be your return, and I shall tell you what
you used to do.”¹²⁴***

In Dhul-Qada’h of Year 10, nearing the end of the month, the rest of Surah Al-Jinn was revealed. The Prophet (saw) was in the Ka’bah and was reciting ayats warning the Jinn and man. Then Allah (swt) revealed,

تَتَجَافَى جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ
يُنْفِقُونَ يَا فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُمْ مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَاءِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ
يَا أَفَمَن كَانَ مُؤْمِنًا كَمَن كَانَ فَاسِقًا لَّا يَسْتَوُونَ - أَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا
الصَّالِحَاتِ فَلَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ الْمَأْوَى نُزُلًا بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ...
قُلْ يَوْمَ الْفَتْحِ لَا يَنفَعُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِيمَانُهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يُنظَرُونَ يَوْمَ لَا تُغْنِي عَنْهُمْ
وَأَنْتَظِرُ إِنَّهُمْ مُنْتَظَرُونَ

¹²⁴ Al-Qur’an – Surah Jinn, 31:1-15

"Their sides forsake their beds, to invoke their Lord in fear and hope, and they spend (charity in Allâh's Cause) out of what We have bestowed on them. No person knows what is hidden for them of joy as a reward for what they used to do.

Is then he who is a believer like him who is a Fasiq (disbeliever and disobedient to Allah (swt))? Not equal are they...

*They say: 'When will this Decision be (i.e. Day of Resurrection), if you are telling the truth?' Say: 'On the Day of Resurrection, no profit will it be to those who disbelieve if they (then) believe! Nor will they be granted a respite.' So turn aside from them (O Muhammad) and await, verily they (too) are waiting.'*¹²⁵

Having received the protection of Al-Mut'am, Muhammad (saw) was able to return to his activities. He once again called the tribes and individuals who would regularly visit Makkah to Islam. In the month of Dhul Hijjah, Muhammad (saw) and his companions contacted the people who came for Hajj. He called them to Islam, informed them about the revelation and cultured them, as he had done so before he was boycotted.

¹²⁵ Al-Qur'an – Surah As- Sajdah, 32:16-30

The Seeking of Nussrah

In the tenth year of Prophethood, the request for protection transformed into a request for power and authority. Many *Mufasssireen*¹²⁶ have presented the following ayah as the command to initiate this change;

وَقُلْ رَبِّ ادْخِلْنِيْ مُدْخَلَ صِدْقٍ وَّاَخْرِجْنِيْ مُخْرَجَ صِدْقٍ وَّاجْعَلْ لِّيْ مِنْ
لَّدُنْكَ سُلْطٰنًا نَّصِيْرًا

“And say (O Muhammad (saw)), ‘My Lord! Let my entry be good, and likewise my exit be good. And grant me from You an authority to help Me.’”¹²⁷

Some commentators have placed this ayah as the command to the Prophet (saw) to emigrate after he had secured the pledges of allegiance. Other commentators have suggested that the cause for the shift was other commands such as the hadeeth of Jaabir, *“Allah has ordered me to seek authority from the army.”*¹²⁸

Whatever the cause, it is agreed that the Messenger Muhammad (saw) began asking the tribes for more than just protection to convey the da’wa. He began asking for the authority and power to implement Islam.

¹²⁶ *Mufasssireen* – (lit. people of exegesis) Commentators of the Qur’an

¹²⁷ Al-Qur’an - Surah Al-Isra’, 17:80

¹²⁸ Ahmad, Volume 3, p. 321

Imaam Wahidi al-Naysaburi¹²⁹ said, *"After Allah (swt) ordered his messenger to seek the authority and power, the Prophet (saw) began to call the heads of the tribes and he would visit them in their areas. He visited around 77 tribes around Makkah. Some offered him conditional authority, others attacked him and some didn't speak to him"*

He visited many tribes, amongst the were Bani Kindah, Bani Ka'b bin abi'ah, Banu Kalb, Banu Haneefah, Bani Qais Ibn Ta'libah, Bani Amr Ibn Muawiyya, Bani Bakr bin Wa'il. Bani Shaybaan, Bani Fazaarah, Bani Murrah, Banu Ghassan and many more.

The seeking of the authority and material power is termed the seeking of Nussrah. The jurists have defined Nussrah¹³⁰ as:

'Persuading influential Muslim individuals in power to hand authority to Muslims in order to implement Islam'

When seeking this support, the Prophet (saw) had three conditions, which needed to be fulfilled, in order for him to accept their support. He would approach the leaders of the tribes, often accompanied by his close companions, in order to determine their suitability.

The First Condition of Nussrah

Nussrah must be sought from someone who has the power to implement Islam internally and externally. It is not possible to ask for power and authority from someone who does not have it.

This is exemplified in the struggle of the Prophet (saw) that he only approached the leaders of the tribes or those who could deliver the power and authority rather than any individual. When the Prophet

¹²⁹ Asbaab ul-Nuzool, Volume 1

¹³⁰ It is pertinent to note that those who eventually delivered the power and authority are termed the Ansaar from the same root word as Nussrah.

(saw) visited Banu Shaybaan he discussed with the leader, Mafrooq; from Banu Amr he spoke to Buhayra; from Banu Kindah he (saw) spoke to the leader Maleeh. After engaging in discussion the Prophet (saw) would determine their strength to make sure they could fulfil the role of providing the power and authority. Abdur Rahman al-Aamree narrated that when the Prophet (saw) spoke to Bani Ka'b Ibn Rabi'ah he (saw) asked, *"What is the Strength of your tribe?"* They replied, *"Nobody dare aim an arrow in front of us or even warm his hands on our fire without our permission!"*¹³¹

Abdullah bin Al-Ajlal has narrated the discussion with Bani Qais Ibn Tha'libah. The Prophet (saw) asked, *"What is your number?"* They replied, *"Plentiful like the stars!"* He (saw) asked, *"What about your defence?"* They replied, *"We do not need any defence. We are the neighbours of the Persians. Neither do we demand protection from them nor do we give asylum to their enemies."* The Prophet (saw) then said, *"If you do this thing for Allah, he will keep you in good order and eventually you will be able to conquer them, marry their women and have them as your servants. Recite Subhaanallah thirty three times, Al Hamdulillah thirty-three times and Allahu Akbar thirty-four times."*¹³²

It is thus clear that without strength the Prophet (saw) was not interested.

It is also worth noting that the Prophet (saw) did not seek power and authority from his companions in Makkah. Allah (swt) makes a distinction between the companions as the Ansaar and the Muhajireen. The Ansaar were the companions who gave the power and authority to the Prophet (saw) whereas the Muhajireen were the ones who emigrated into their protection. To say that the Muhajireen were weak and unable to fight is an insult to brave companions such as Hamzah

¹³¹ Dala'il an-Nabuwwat, Abu Na'eem, p.103

Ibn Abdul Muttalib, Umar bin Al-Khattab and Ali Ibn Abi Taalib. It was only after the support had been given that the companions raised the sword and began fighting.

وَالسَّابِقُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ
اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا
أَبَدًا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

*“And the first to embrace Islam of the Muhajiroun and the
Ansaar and also those who followed them exactly (in Faith).
Allah is well-pleased with them as they are well-pleased with
Him.”¹³³*

In our reality today, the people who maintain the balance of power are usually the armies who need to replicate the role of the Ansaar, and the other Muslims need to replicate the role of the Muhajireen. It has been suggested by some quarters that the Mujahideen that are fighting in occupied territories may be the people of Nussrah and we should seek power and authority from them. Undoubtedly, the sincere and knowledgeable Mujahideen will implement Shari’ah when they repel the enemy, but whilst they are trying to secure the area, they cannot be classified as the people of Nussrah because they do not yet control the area.

The Second Condition of Nussrah

Some Muslims have claimed that the Prophet (saw) sought Nussrah from some tribes before they embraced Islam. It is therefore claimed that Muslims can now seek authority and power from non-Muslims. This would mean that although the ruler would be a Muslim, the

¹³² Al Bidaayah, Volume 3, p.140

¹³³ Al-Qur’an - Surah At-Taubah, 9:100

people who will ultimately hold the balance of power will not be Muslims. And to have Kufaar in authority over the Muslims is prohibited because Allah (swt) commands the Muslims in the Qur'an.

الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ بِكُمْ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فَتْحٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ قَالُوا أَلَمْ نَكُنْ مَّعَكُمْ وَإِنْ
كَانَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ نَصِيبٌ قَالُوا أَلَمْ نَسْتَحِذْ عَلَيْكُمْ وَنَمْنَعُكُم مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فَاللَّهُ
يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَنْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا

*“...And never will Allah grant to the unbelievers authority
over the believers.”¹³⁴*

This ayah is not a prophecy in the Qur'an; rather it is a command for Muslims not to allow the Kufaar to have authority over them as Allah does not permit that. The Muslims are therefore restricted to seeking Nussrah only from other Muslims.

This does not necessarily imply that it is not permitted to seek Nussrah when they are not in Muslim lands. It merely means that Muslims have to seek the people whom they can ask.

It is also worth mentioning that although many individuals in the armies in Muslim countries are at the forefront of oppressing the Muslims, it is not possible to label the Muslim armies as Kaafir. A blanket statement cannot apply to all individuals in the armies, because Islam does not recognise the concept of entity. It is not a Muslim army that will be tried on the day of judgement; rather it will be the individuals in that army.

Amongst the individuals in the army are people who detest Islam and actively seek to destroy any semblance of Islam and are loyal to their

¹³⁴ Al-Qur'an - Surah An-Nisaa, 4:141

illegitimate ruler. However there are others in the army who have a natural love for Islam and given the right understanding, will be prepared to defend Islam and bring it back as an authority.

As an example, Khalid al-Istambuli was a ranking soldier in the Egyptian army who interacted with Islam and sacrificed his life for the betterment of the Muslims for the sake of Allah. On October 6th 1981 he killed Anwar Sadat, the despotic ruler of Egypt, responsible for the peace accord with Israel in Camp David, 1979.

The Third Condition of Nussrah

Thirdly, the Nussrah should be unrestricted. This is exemplified in the discussions the Messenger (saw) and the Sahabah had with many of the tribes he visited. In these discussions it is apparent that the Prophet (saw) rejected any condition that the tribes placed. Indeed the Prophet (saw) showed how the Muslim should not compromise his values and principles in the most testing times.

It is narrated that Muhammad (saw) visited the tribe of Banu Shaibaan and he (saw) invited them to Islam and after that he introduced Abu Bakr (ra) to one of their leaders, whose name was Mafrooq. Abu Bakr (ra) is reported to have asked him, *"O Mafrooq! How many people are you?"* He replied, *"We are more than 1000, and the 1000 will never be defeated because of a shortage in number,"* Abu Bakr (ra) said, *"And what is your power?"* Mafrooq replied, *"We are requested to put the utmost effort in but the result is in the hands of God."* Abu Bakr (ra) requested, *"And how are you during the war with the enemy?"* Mafrooq replied *"We are the most angry people when we meet the army and we are the hardest people meeting the enemy. While we are angry we prefer horses to our children and prefer weapons to the cow heavy with milk and victory is from Allah, sometimes we win and sometimes we lose."*

He looked at the Prophet (saw) and inquired, *"Are you the brother from Quraysh?"* Abu Bakr (ra) replied, *"Did you receive the news that a Messenger of Allah (swt) has been sent, this is the Messenger of Allah (saw)."* Mafrooq said, *"I heard that he has claimed so."*

He looked at the Prophet (saw) and asked, *"To what are you calling me, O brother of Quraysh?"* The Prophet (saw) replied, *"I call you to bear witness that there is no God but Allah and to associate none with him and that I am the Messenger of Allah and to protect me and give me power because the Quraysh have denounced the command of God and disbelieved his messenger and have strengthened themselves with falsehood against righteousness and I call you not to commit fornication, and not to bury your daughters and Allah is the most generous."*

Mafrooq continued to ask questions to the Prophet (saw) and the people listened and were moved. One of them said, *"By God, people who disbelieve in you and don't support you are cursed!"* Abu Bakr (ra) reports that the spiritual head of Banu Shaibaan, Haanee bin Qabeesa said, *"O brother of Quraysh, I have heard your speech and I see that if we leave our deen because of your speech it would be a wrong thing to do, and would cause a bad impact on our people. The one who hurries always makes mistakes. The ones behind us are many who could disagree but we will go to them and return and will consider your proposal and you do the same."*

The chief of the army, Al-Muthanna Ibn Haaritha said, *"We are a tribe living in a country between the Persian River and the Arabic Sea. O Muhammad! As for support and the power you requested, we will support you rigorously and whoever harms you will never be forgiven for his mistake nor will his excuse be accepted, but as for the side of the Persian River, whoever among your people exceeds his limit will not be forgiven nor excused".* He continued, *"We will support you against everybody but between us and the Persians is a treaty, and the Persian King will never like us to protect someone who does not recognise them."*

The Messenger (saw) said, *"Fair enough, your army and you are honest, but the deen of Allah (swt) cannot be supported except by the one who protects and supports it from all sides."*¹³⁵ Hence the Messenger (saw) refused the Nussrah because the condition that was stipulated was the refusal to wage war with Persia.

Muhammad (saw) also went to Banu Sa'sa'ah and called them to Islam. One man from among them, known as Buhayra Ibn Faraas said, *"By God, if I can gain this man, with his beautiful message onto my side, I will be able to control all of the Arabs in the Arabian Peninsula."* He then asked Muhammad (saw), *"What do you call us to?"* Muhammad (saw) said, *"I call you towards God and to believe in me and to give me the power to implement God's Law."* He further enquired, *"What will happen if we give you the allegiance and you become in charge and Allah makes you dominant over those who differ with you? When you pass away will we get the power back from you and will we be in authority after you?"* Muhammad (saw) replied, *"No, this matter is in the Hands of Allah and he gives it to whomever he wishes."* He then said to the Prophet (saw), *"Are you telling us that we are going to lay our necks to be slaughtered by the Arabs to protect you and your companions and give you power and when you pass away, somebody else could take the power? We do not need you nor do we have any interest in you."*¹³⁶

Ibn Burhanuddeen Al-Shaafi'ie elaborates with the addition, *"On the first day the Prophet Muhammad (saw) called Aamir Ibn Sa'sa'ah to Islam. At noon he (saw) said to him, 'Where is the Ameer of War and the Ameer of your Army?' Aamir said, 'Call Buhayra Ibn Faraas, my Ameer of Opinion and the Ameer of War.'* Abu Bakr wanted to speak with him. He began to ask, *'Tell me about your war? Are you people skilled in war?'* they replied, *'Yes, we inherited the skill of fighting from our forefathers.'* Abu Bakr continued, *'Tell me how many fighters you have got?'* They said, *'We have*

¹³⁵ Raud al-Aanaf, by Imaam al Suhaili

¹³⁶ At-Tabari, Volume 3, p.1205

1400 fighters.' Abu Bakr carried on, 'Tell me how many of them have got swords?' Buhayra replied, 'Each fighter has his own sword. And among them we have 400 who have arrows.' Abu Bakr said, 'Tell me how many horses you have?' He said, 'For each of our fighters we have one horse, and another spare one. Our fighters are fed properly. They eat in each battle a few hundred camels to give them strength to fight the enemy.' Abu Bakr then asked, 'Tell me how you are in war?' They said, 'We are very harsh in combat. We like to eat from the kidney of the enemy!' Abu Bakr said, 'What tactics do you use in war?' They said, 'We do not fight in two lines, nor face to face. We fight like the spider, we surround the enemy in the middle of the web and we kill them from all directions. We make sure nobody from the enemy will remain to relate the story of the battle to their children.' Abu Bakr turned to the Prophet (saw) and said, 'O Messenger of Allah (saw)! Verily, these people have power.' Muhammad (saw) turned to Aamir and said, 'O Aamir, I ask you to give me support and protection.'

After their refusal, they returned back to their homeland and explained what had happened to a respected old man. They said, 'We experienced something that we never experienced before. A man from Quraysh, from the children of Banu Abdul-Muttalib, claims to be a Prophet. He called us to protect him but also called us to take power and he would come with us to our country and we will give him power and he promised us that if we gave him power we will lead over Arab and non-Arab.' The elderly man asked, "What did you say to him?" They said, 'We said to him that we need power after him.' The old man then put his hands over his head (in dismay) and said, "Can we rectify this mistake? Can we rectify it? Is there any way we can catch this man before anyone else does?" They asked, 'What are you saying? Why?' He said, "That is an honour. There is no one from the sons of Ishmael who can claim what this man claims. By the One in whose Hand is my soul, and by al-Laat and al-Uzzah which we worship, nobody Ishmaelite ever claimed that. Whoever claims this from Banu Muttalib must be truthful. Can we correct this mistake?" They replied, 'After we ridiculed him, I do not think we can show our face to him.' The old man replied to them, "You have

killed yourself and cut the honour of being in a position where you can listen to Banu Ishmael when the truth had been revealed to their fathers.”¹³⁷

Thus Banu Aamir Ibn Sa’sa’ah were rejected because of their insistence to be the rulers after the Prophet (saw).

Trusting in Victory

Many Muslims today make judgements based upon rationality, reality or practicality rather than from divine texts. They rationalise the possibility of success or failure and from this premise determine the actions they should undertake. This premise is completely wrong because the Muslim is obliged to do what Allah orders and does not have the right to disobey Allah. From the context of seeking Nussrah some Muslims see it as an impossibility to take Nussrah from those in power because those in power are at the forefront of the oppression of Muslims.

This was also true during the time of the Prophet (saw) and the companions. It is sufficient to give the example of Umar Ibn al-Khattab who used to be at the forefront of the persecution of Muslims. Later in his life he became a Muslim and began defending them.

Qais narrated that he heard Said bin Zaid bin ‘Amr bin Nufail saying in the mosque of Al-Kufa, *“By Allah, I have seen myself tied and forced by Umar to leave Islam before Umar himself embraced Islam...”¹³⁸*

Some Muslims become defeated in their mentality because the results are not forthcoming. Inspiration needs to be taken from the messenger of Allah (saw) who suffered so heavily at the hands of the Kufaar in his mission for Nussrah. He (saw) never considered himself as failing in his

¹³⁷ Ar Raheek al Makhtoom, Al-Mubarakpuree, p. 142

¹³⁸ Saheeh Al-Bukhari, Volume 5, Hadith 202

mission because the criteria he used to judge his success and failure was not the acceptance or rejection by the people, and the tribes. Rather his criteria was determined by his adherence to the command of Allah and his steadfastness therein.

Rejection by the Tribes

Rabi'ah Ibn Abaad said, "I was with my father in Mina and the Messenger of Allah (saw) was visiting the tribes in Mina from place to place and he used to stand up and shout, *"O people of Fulaan! I am the Messenger of God. God orders you to worship none except He and not to associate anything with Him and to give up all those that you worship that does not benefit you. And to believe in me and to accept me and to protect me in order to make Allah's Deen prevail so that I can fulfil that which Allah ordered me to do."* He said, *"Behind him I saw a man who was dressed smartly with two plaits."* This man said, *"O people of Abaad. Do you know what this man is calling for? He is calling you to give up your own al-Laat and al-Uzzah, to give up your own way of life, to give up the Deen of your mothers and fathers, and to give up your alliance with Bani Malik. He calls you towards innovation and misguidance. Do not listen to him. Do not obey him. Verily this man is misguided like those who take you away from the Deen of your forefathers."* Rabi'ah then said to his father, *"Who is this smart man who chases Muhammad (saw) from place to place, who attacks him whenever he calls the people?"* His father said, *"That is his uncle, Abu Lahab."* He would say, *"I know him very well, he is my nephew. He is mentally ill. He has become a deviant. Who will know him more than me? I am Abdul -Uzzah Ibn Muttalib."*¹³⁹

He also entered the people of Banu Kalb, who were also known as Banu Abdullah, and called them to Islam and said, *"O Banu Abdullah! Verily, Allah chose the best name for your fathers. I hope that name will affect you and you will respect what I will say."* They said, *"Do not take advantage from the names of our fathers. We know who you are and what you call for. You are a*

deviant and we do not deal with the deviants.”¹⁴⁰ Similar replies came from Banu Saleem and Banu Nadir. All of them used to reject his proposal and ridicule him (saw). Referring to Abu Lahab, who was the uncle of the Prophet (saw), they used to say, “Your family knows you better and yet they do not follow you.”¹⁴¹

Perhaps the most painful response came from Banu Haneefa. Abu Bakr (ra) asked for their origin and lineage in order to evaluate their strength. Abu Bakr (ra) asked, “Do you kill the neighbours and steal their money?” They replied, “No!” He inquired, “Are you from amongst the highway robbers?” They again replied, “No!” He (saw) said, “You are from the lowest lineages and not the highest.” As the top lineage are all criminals and highway robbers in the Arabian Peninsula. Then they asked Abu Bakr (ra) about his lineage. He told them that he was from the Quraysh from Banu Muraa. They said, “You are from the good people!” In the end they said about the Prophet (saw), “We think your friend is mentally ill and some evil spell has touched him, and he wants money and power without brain, honour and dignity. This is why his tribe has thrown him (saw) out.”

After they had insulted him, they let the children curse and spit on him (saw).

A’iesha (ra) said, “Nobody had a more reprehensible response than those of Banu Haneefah, They called him names and began to spit on him. Abu Bakr and Ali (ra), who were with Muhammad (saw), tried to protect him, but were also ridiculed, kicked and had camel droppings and stones thrown onto them as they left Banu Haneefah.”¹⁴²

¹³⁹ Al-Haithami, Volume 6, p.22

¹⁴⁰ Ibn Ishaq

¹⁴¹ Kitaab Seerah by Imaam Waqidi

¹⁴² Al-Bidaayah, Volume 3, p.139

Muhammad's Call enters Yathrib

Muhammad (saw) continued on his path, calling people to Islam and what he had been ordered. Whenever people came to Makkah he (saw) would call them for support, seeking power for authority. Despite being continuously spurned by the numerous tribes and their leaders, he (saw) was unrelenting in his call until it became commonly known that Muhammad Ibn Abdullah, one of the sons of Abdul Muttalib, had become deluded. People avoided him and spoke against him. People would gather from all parts of the Peninsula to meet Muhammad (saw) so that they could tell their own people that they had seen the 'foolish' man, who had been spoken to from the Heavens.

Suwayd Ibn Saamid

However, from among those that came to Makkah was Suwayd Ibn Saamid, a Libyan who had settled in Yathrib (Madinah). He was an extremely good poet, and was known amongst the people as *'The Perfect'* (*Al-Kaamil*), since he had a good build, was smart and was of noble lineage. At the beginning of Year 11 after Prophethood, He came to Makkah in order to perform the Hajj. When Muhammad (saw) heard that Suwayd was coming, he came out with a group of his companions in order to meet him at the Ka'bah.

Muhammad (saw) invited Suwayd to Islam. Suwayd responded, *"Maybe what I have been given is similar to what you have?"* Muhammad (saw) said, *"And what do you have with you?"* He said, *"I have with me the Wisdom of Luqman."* Muhammad (saw) said, *"Read to me what you have."* When Suwayd finished, Muhammad (saw) said, *"Verily, what you read contains beautiful words. But, what I have is better than that. I have the*

Qur'an, the book that Allah (swt) has sent to me. It contains guidance, and Noor (light) which is a complete answer to all problems."

The Prophet began to recite the Qur'an and then reiterated his invitation of Suwayd to Islam. Suwayd replied, *"By God! How can I claim to have any intellect if I reject that which you call me to, O Muhammad! By God! I always thought that the wisdom of Luqman, which I possessed, is the best thing any man can read. But after you recited to me, by God, there is no comparison between the two. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and I bear witness that you are the Messenger of Allah!"*

Suwayd Ibn Saamid was one of the highly respected poets of Yathrib; his poetry carrying much weight throughout Yathrib. Before leaving back for Yathrib, Suwayd said to Muhammad (saw), *"Leave this matter to me. I will make sure that everybody (in Yathrib) will know about you."* However, on his return the two tribes of Al-Aws and Al-Khazraj were fighting and in the crossfire, Suwayd Ibn Saamid was killed.

Iyaas Ibn Muaaz

Iyaas Ibn Muaaz was from the youth of Yathrib. He came to Makkah with a delegation from the tribe of Al-Aws seeking to orchestrate an alliance with the Quraysh against Al-Khazraj during the war of Bua'ath. Iyaas went to the Quraysh with his petition for a military pact. The Quraysh initially responded to him, *"We are smaller in number than Khazraj, but we are noble and are better fighters than them."* When Rasoolullah (saw) heard about this delegation he, and a group of his companions, went to the meeting and sat amongst them.

Some of the companions said to Iyaas, *"Would you like to learn about an offer better than that which you seek from the Quraysh?"* Iyaas replied, *"What is it that you can offer us?"* The Sahabi said, *"We can offer to you the Prophet of Allah, Muhammad Ibn Abdullah (saw)."* They replied, *"We have heard about you!"* Muhammad (saw) then spoke, *"I am the Messenger of*

Allah sent to the whole of mankind (calling them) to worship and to submit and to follow none but He and His command and not to associate anyone (nor anything) with His command. Not to associate with Him any god. He sent to me the Qur'an, and I can recite to you a portion from it." Muhammad (saw) then began to recite the Qur'an to them. According to Imaam Waahidie, the Prophet (saw) began to recite from Surah Ad-Duha.

When Iyaas Ibnu Muaaz heard this, he turned to his people saying, *"O my people! Question this man about whatever you wish. I am interested to find out more about him."* Someone then shouted out, *"Tell us about Islam."*

Muhammad (saw) replied, *"Al-Islam is the command of Allah which Allah has ordered me to make prevalent. He (swt) asked me to seek power and support for it, ordering that it is for the whole of mankind. Verily, the one who supports the command of God, God will support him over all mankind."* Iyaas said, *"By God! This offer is better than the offer of the Quraysh."* Anas Bin Raafi'a who was one amongst the delegation from Al-Aws picked up a handful of sand and threw it onto the face of Iyaas Bin Muaaz saying, *"Woe be unto you and what you say! By God we did not come (here) for this reason."* Iyaas fell silent.

Muhammad (saw) then stood up and said, *"O Allah! (Bear witness) Did I not pass the message?"* He (saw) then returned back to his home. The delegation from Yathrib returned to their homeland empty handed neither forging an alliance with the Quraysh nor accepting the Deen of Islam. When they returned to Yathrib, Iyaas told the people what he had heard in Makkah. He said, *"Verily, what I experienced in Makkah was something I have never seen before."* He then told the people whatever he knew about Islam even though he was not a Muslim himself. Later on he would made Takbeer and Tasbeeh (praise of Allah) and would repeat the Shahadah numerously until the people said that Iyaas had become a deviant and, as a result, he was eventually assassinated.

Abu Dharr Al-Ghaffari

Even though these two great people, Suwayd and Iyaas were killed, the news of Islam spread throughout the houses of Madinah, in particular it entered the house of Abu Dharr Al-Ghaffari. Abu Dharr was not from Yathrib himself, but from a surrounding village known as Ghaffar. When he heard the news, he felt it incumbent on himself that he had to go to Makkah to discover who this man Muhammad (saw) was.

Imaam Bukhari reported, on the authority of Ibn Abbas, that when the Message of Muhammad (saw) reached outside Makkah and entered different parts of the world carried through the tongues of poets and the delegations of the different tribes visiting Makkah, the news also reached Abu Dharr. He said to his brother, *"Let us go to Makkah. I want to know about this man. I want to meet this man who claims to be a Prophet and who receives news from the heaven. I want to hear some of what I heard from those who heard from him. Verily what he says cannot come from the mouth of any normal man."* He took his brother and went to Makkah. The brother of Abu Dharr was the first to meet Muhammad (saw) and when he went back to Abu Dharr to report what he had found, he said, *"I met him (Muhammad). He commands good and he forbids evil. He recites words that are not poetry."* Abu Dharr said, *"You have not satisfied me. I want to know more. Let me go to see him myself."*

Abu Dharr took his water-skin and a stick and proceeded towards Makkah. On arriving, Abu Dharr remained in the Ka'bah but he did not seek or ask anyone about the Prophet (saw), rather he continued drinking Zamzam water.

Then Ali (ra) passed by Abu Dharr and said, *"It seems you are a stranger?"* He said, *"Yes."* Ali took Abu Dharr to his house but at this time the two did not discuss Islam.

The next morning Abu Dharr went to the Mosque to ask about the Prophet (saw) but, to his surprise, no one was willing to cooperate or talk with him about this matter. Ali (ra) passed by him again and asked, *"Hasn't the man recognized his dwelling-place yet? Come with me,"* Ali continued, *"What is your business? What has brought you to this town?"* Abu Dharr said to him, *"If you keep my secret, I shall tell you."* He said, *"I shall."*

Abu Dharr excitedly said to Ali, *"We have heard that a person has appeared here, claiming to be a Prophet. I sent my brother to speak to him and when he returned, he did not bring a satisfactory answer (to me); so I wanted to meet him myself."* Ali (ra) said to Abu Dharr, *"You have reached your destination! I am going to him (saw) now, so follow me, and wherever I enter, follow after me. If I should see someone who may cause you trouble, I shall stand near a wall pretending to mend my shoes (as a warning), and you should then leave."*

Abu Dharr was led by Ali (ra) to the place where the Prophet was resting whereupon he asked, *"O Messenger of Allah! I have listened to you for the last three days without you realising it. I have not heard anything that you have said that may have affected your sanity, your mind or your ability. Verily I bear witness that there is no God but Allah (swt), verily Muhammad (saw) is his Messenger."* The Prophet said to Abu Dharr *"O Abu Dharr! Go back to your people and tell them who I am and tell them about this matter."* He replied, *"O Prophet of Allah, I have promised to myself that if I meet the Messenger of God I will announce my conversation publicly until it reaches the heart of the Ka'bah."*

Abu Dharr went to the Mosque, where some people from the Quraysh were present, and said, *"O people of the Quraysh! By the One in whose Hand is my soul! I testify that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah, and I (also) testify that Muhammad is Allah's slave and His Messenger. And by the One in whose Hand is my soul! This man carries the truth and*

when he comes out; I will support him and call upon my people in Yathrib to support him."

Upon hearing this, the Quraysh exclaimed, *"Punish this Sabi (i.e. Muslim)!"* They got up and beat Abu Dharr until he was close to death. At this point Al-Abbas saw Abu Dharr being beaten and came to his rescue by throwing himself over Abu Dharr in order to protect him. He then faced them and said, *"Woe to you! You want to kill a man from the tribe of Ghaffar, even though your trade and your communications to As-Shams are through the territory of Yathrib. If you kill him you will have a problem travelling through Yathrib to As-Sham."*

They then left him. But the next morning Abu Dharr returned to the Ka'bah and repeated to the people what he had said on the previous day. Again the Quraysh said, *"Punish this Sabi! (extremist)"* and again they beat him until Al-Abbas protected him once again and repeated what he told the Quraysh the day before. The Quraysh finally decided that the best way to deal with Abu Dharr was to extradite him from Makkah, so they sent him back to Yathrib.

Tufayl Ibn 'Amr al Dawsī

Tufayl came from the tribe of Al-Daws, which was located close to Yemen. Tufayl was a famous poet as well as being an intellectual nobleman of his tribe and was well respected by the people of Makkah. He arrived in Makkah on the 11th year of the Prophethood in the second month, Safar. When Tufayl entered Makkah, the Quraysh immediately received him and provided him with his every want. They told him, *"O Tufayl! Verily a nobleman like you, a leader of his people! In coming to our country is an honour for us and for the people of Makkah. But we want to warn you that there is one man among us who has a mental problem and with his ideas he divides our community and he makes people ridicule our affairs and us. He speaks like a magician and his words are like magic and he causes fitna (problems) between man and wife, parent and*

children, brother and brothers, sister and sisters. We are concerned about your people and yourself, so when you enter Makkah do not listen to him nor speak to him." Tufayl responded, *"I have no problem (with this)."* Abu Jahl then replied, *"What do you say if I were to give you two pieces of cotton which you could place into your ears, so whenever you enter the Ka'bah you need never hear Muhammad and his words will never have an effect upon you, since his words are full of magic."*

The Quraysh provided Tufayl with the cotton and continued to warn him about Muhammad (saw) until he became terrified. When Tufayl entered the surroundings of the Ka'bah, he noticed a man standing up and performing a strange act. Bemused by this, he came closer to Muhammad (saw) to investigate what he was doing exactly. As he approached him, he realised that this man was neither a threat to him nor to anyone around him.

Tufayl said, *"Woe to me! I am a poet and I can listen to what this man is reciting. If it is good then I will know it and if it is bad then I will know it. Woe to me! I claim to be a man who is the leader of my people and yet I am worried about hearing a few words of a stranger? I know the difference between good and bad and the difference between beautiful and distasteful words of poetry, so why should I not listen to him?"*

Tufayl then followed Muhammad (saw) until he entered his home and said to him, *"(Some) people have asked me not to speak to you and others have made me terrified of you. Yet, in fact the more people talk about you the more I am interested in speaking to you - so tell me what are you calling people for and let me see if I can help you with what is on your mind."* The Prophet (saw) explained Islam to him and he recited a couple of chapters of the Qur'an. Tufayl listened attentively until he finished reciting and said, *"By God! I have not heard any thing more beautiful than this, and there is not a request more honourable than this request. By God! Verily what you have just said can take the heart of anybody who hears it."*

Following this he embraced Islam and continued, *"By God! I am a man who is respected by my tribe, when I go to them I will ask them to embrace Islam and I believe that all of them will embrace Islam. If I return to my people can you ask Allah (swt) to give me a miracle so that all of them will accept and none of them will reject (this matter)?"* The Prophet replied, *"I have asked Allah (swt) to bestow upon you a sign and the sign will be a light in your face like a candle, so whenever people talk to you your face will light up."* Tufayl responded, *"O my Lord not in my face! I am frightened that they will believe that I have a defect on my face, O my Lord! Let the light emanate from my whip so whenever I slash my whip it will create a large spark."* The Prophet told Tufayl that Allah (swt) had granted his wish.

Tufayl first converted his family before returning to his tribe where, from amongst them, seventy people embraced Islam. At a later date, Tufayl made Hijra to Madinah from Yemen to accompany the Muslims when he had heard that Muhammad (saw) had been ordered to enter Madinah. He resided in Madinah and fought in many wars alongside Muhammad (saw) until he became shaheed at the battle of Yamamah.

Even though Tufayl was a nobleman, he never had the power nor the influence over his tribe for Muhammad (saw) to seek Nussrah from. However his work for the sake of Islam is clear for all to see. His conversion to Islam is a reminder to the Muslims today that even when our enemies are continually attacking us and the call that we carry, they are in reality aiding us. For just like when Tufayl (ra) was intrigued and interested by what the Quraysh told him about Muhammad (saw) and Islam, so too are the people of today intrigued by the constant conversation about Islam, whether good or bad, in the press. This is the reason why, despite the media propaganda against Islam and its open derision of Muslims, the rate of people accepting Islam and taking Shahadah is ever increasing daily.

People Who Accepted Islam from Outside Makkah

Amongst those who accepted Islam from outside Makkah included Dumaad Al-Azidi. He was from an area known as Azid in Yemen and his profession included treating people with mental afflictions. When he heard from the people that Muhammad (saw) had been affected with mental illness (the Quraish called him 'Majnoon') he felt it his duty to go and try to treat him (saw).

He came to Muhammad (saw) and said, *"I am Dumaad. I treat those who have mental illness. Do you wish to acquire my services?"* Muhammad (saw) replied, *"Indeed, all praise is due to Allah. We praise Him and depend on Him. Whomsoever He guides, none can misguide and whomsoever He misguides none can guide. I bear witness that there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is His servant."* Muhammad (saw) then began to speak. Dumaad hastily interrupted him and said, *"Wait! Can you repeat what you have just said?"* The Prophet Muhammad (saw) then repeated this three times. Dumaad continued, *"I have heard the sayings of the Priests, the Magicians and I have never heard from them words, like the words you have just spoken. Words that span the roots of all languages. Give me your hand! Let me give you allegiance. Verily, indeed you are the Messenger of God."*

In Year 11 after Prophethood during the Hajj season, the Islamic call began to establish firm roots within the hearts of a select few people. Despite the fact that the Prophet Muhammad (saw) had to face all manner of persecution and distortions from the people of Makkah, he (saw) never hesitated to travel from place to place, area to area, in order to visit people and convey the message. On one night, accompanied by Abu Bakr (ra) and Ali (ra), he (saw) went to the suburbs around which Zuhail and Shiybaan from Banu Sa'laba were located. He (saw) called them towards the Deen of Islam and a heated debate between the people of Zuhail and Abu Bakr erupted. However, at this juncture they did not accept the call, preferring to wait for others to enter Islam before they themselves did so.

After this incident, Muhammad (saw) was passing by the Aqabah of the city of Mina, when he heard some discussion amongst the people. He approached the gathering of six people, who were all from Yathrib. Amongst them were Asad Bin Zurrara Al-Najjar, Awf Ibn Harith Bin Rufa'a Al-Najjar, Rafi' Ibn Malik Al-Zurake, Qutba Bin Aamir Al Selama, Utbah Bin Aamir Al-Haram Ibn Ka'ab and Jabir Ibn Abdillah Al Ubaydillah Ibn Ghanam.

The people of Yathrib were used to hearing the sayings of the Jews that a Prophet would be sent during their lifetime and that he would lead their people to fight and destroy the Arabs; the way the people of Aad and Iram were destroyed previously. The tribe of Khazraj were aware of what the Jews believed so they approached the Prophet (saw) with caution.

The Prophet (saw) said to them, *"Who are you?"* They replied, *"We are the people of Khazraj."* The Prophet asked, *"Are you the people in alliance with the Jews?"* They said, *"Yes."* The Prophet continued, *"Will you then listen to me and hear what I have to offer?"* They agreed and listened to the call of Islam and to the recitation of the Qur'an. They spoke amongst themselves, saying, *"Do you know something O people! Verily this is the Prophet that the Jews keep promising us is going to come. Let us hurry and enter his call before anybody else comes to meet him."*

After accepting Islam they said to the Prophet, *"O Prophet of Allah! We left our people behind us and there is no greater animosity between two nations than the animosity between us and the others (al-'Aus). Maybe God can unite us (both) under you. We are going to go to them and call them (the 'Aus) to your Deen and offer them what you ask us. By God if they accept this Deen and if you unite us together there will be no man more dignified nor powerful than you in the whole of Arabia."*

The tribe of Kharzaj sought help from the Prophet (saw) to unite their people as they had been involved in a long drawn out war lasting many years with the people of 'Aus. It had weakened the people of Yathrib, as well as the political influence that the Arabs held over the city, thus benefiting the Jews immensely. When the 'Aus and Khazaraj had been united, they dominated Yathrib politically and shared equal hatred and contempt for the Jews, collaborating even with the Christians of As-ham, against them. As a result of this alliance, a significant number of the Jewish community was killed leaving them with little power and the Arabs dominant.

The Jews were filled with rooted hatred against the Arabs but realized that they did not have the influence nor resources to form a resilient force against the 'Aus and the Khazraj; knowing that such confrontation would lead to their extermination. Rather they appreciated that a crafty and tactful approach was needed - one which did not involve confrontation but would ultimately lead to political instability in Yathrib. The Jews devised a plan to divide and separate the 'Aus and Khazraj causing them to fight and eventually raise arms against one another. The Jews were thus able to gain revenge over the Arabs and rose in power to control Yathrib with their ever-increasing wealth.

Following their discussions, the Khazraj returned to Madinah and as they had promised, carried Islam to the people until the words of Muhammad (saw) and Islam reached every single household. Of great significance is the fact that these events preceded Mus'ab Ibn Umayr's arrival into Yathrib. His purpose was to educate the new Muslims and continue the da'wah, which would eventually alter the face of Arabia and indeed the entire world forever.

Al-Isra' Wal Miraj

In an atmosphere where there were signs that the call of Islam was beginning to spread and establish its roots in the hearts and minds of people, both in Makkah and outside of it, and that the Da'wah was becoming more of a political threat to the seat of Quraysh, an event was to occur that would be so controversial that it would shake and test the Iman and belief of each and every Muslim in the whole of Arabia, Al-Isra' Wal Miraj.

Allah (swt) says,

سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَىٰ بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا مِّنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَى
الَّذِي بَارَكْنَا حَوْلَهُ لِنُرِيَهُ مِنْ آيَاتِنَا إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ

“Glorified (and Exalted) is He (Allah) who took His slave (Muhammad (saw)) for a journey by night from Al-Masjid Al-Haram (in Makkah) to Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa (in Jerusalem), the surrounding (area) whereof We have blessed, in order that We might show him of Our Signs. Verily, He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.”¹⁴³

In Saheeh Bukhari, it is recorded that that Malik ibn Sa'sa'ah said that Allah's Messenger (saw) described to them his Night Journey saying, "While I was lying in al-Hatim or al-Hijr, suddenly someone came to me and cut my body open from here to here. He then took out my heart. Then a gold tray of Belief was brought to me and my heart was washed and was filled (with

¹⁴³ Al-Qur'an - Surah Al-Isra', 17:1

Belief) and then returned to its original place. Then a white animal which was smaller than a mule and bigger than a donkey was brought to me.

"The animal's step (was so wide that it) reached the farthest point within the reach of the animal's sight. I was carried on it, and Gabriel set out with me till we reached the nearest heaven. When he asked for the gate to be opened, it was asked, 'Who is it?' Gabriel answered, 'Gabriel.' It was asked, 'Who is accompanying you?' Gabriel replied, 'Muhammad.' It was asked, 'Has Muhammad been called?' Gabriel replied in the affirmative. Then it was said, 'He is welcomed. What an excellent visit his is!'

The gate was opened, and when I went over the first heaven, I saw Adam there. Gabriel said (to me). This is your father, Adam; pay him your greetings.' So I greeted him and he returned the greeting to me and said, 'You are welcomed, O pious son and pious Prophet.' Then Gabriel ascended with me till we reached the second heaven. Gabriel asked for the gate to be opened. It was asked, 'Who is it?' Gabriel answered, 'Gabriel.' It was asked, 'Who is accompanying you?' Gabriel replied, 'Muhammad.' It was asked, 'Has he been called?' Gabriel answered in the affirmative. Then it was said, 'He is welcomed. What an excellent visit his is!'

The gate was opened. When I went over the second heaven, there I saw Yahya (i.e. John) and Isa (i.e. Jesus) who were cousins of each other. Gabriel said (to me), 'These are John and Jesus; pay them your greetings.' So I greeted them and both of them returned my greetings to me and said, 'You are welcomed, O pious brother and pious Prophet.'

Then Gabriel ascended with me to the third heaven and asked for its gate to be opened. It was asked, 'Who is it?' Gabriel replied, 'Gabriel.' It was asked, 'Who is accompanying you?' Gabriel replied, 'Muhammad.' It was asked, 'Has he been called?' Gabriel replied in the affirmative. Then it was said, 'He is welcomed, what an excellent visit his is!'

The gate was opened, and when I went over the third heaven there I saw Joseph. Gabriel said (to me), 'This is Joseph; pay him your greetings.' So I greeted him and he returned the greeting to me and said, 'You are welcomed, O pious brother and pious Prophet.

Then Gabriel ascended with me to the fourth heaven and asked for its gate to be opened. It was asked, 'Who is it?' Gabriel replied, 'Gabriel.' It was asked, 'Who is accompanying you?' Gabriel replied, 'Muhammad.' It was asked, 'Has he been called?' Gabriel replied in the affirmative. Then it was said, 'He is welcomed, what an excellent visit his is!'

The gate was opened, and when I went over the fourth heaven, there I saw Idris. Gabriel said (to me), 'This is Idris; pay him your greetings.' So I greeted him and he returned the greeting to me and said, 'You are welcomed, O pious brother and pious Prophet.'

Then Gabriel ascended with me to the fifth heaven and asked for its gate to be opened. It was asked, 'Who is it?' Gabriel replied, 'Gabriel.' It was asked, 'Who is accompanying you?' Gabriel replied, 'Muhammad.' It was asked, 'Has he been called?' Gabriel replied in the affirmative. Then it was said, 'He is welcomed. What an excellent visit his is!'

So when I went over the fifth heaven, there I saw Harun (i.e. Aaron), Gabriel said (to me), 'This is Aaron; pay him your greetings.' I greeted him and he returned the greeting to me and said, 'You are welcomed, O pious brother and pious Prophet.'

Then Gabriel ascended with me to the sixth heaven and asked for its gate to be opened. It was asked, 'Who is it?' Gabriel replied, 'Gabriel.' It was asked, 'Who is accompanying you?' Gabriel replied, 'Muhammad.' It was asked, 'Has he been called?' Gabriel replied in the affirmative. It was said, 'He is welcomed. What an excellent visit his is!'

When I went (over the sixth heaven), there I saw Moses, Gabriel said (to me), 'This is Moses; pay him your greeting. So I greeted him and he returned the greeting to me and said, 'You are welcomed, O pious brother and pious Prophet.'

When I left him (i.e. Moses) he wept. Someone asked him, 'What makes you weep?' Moses said, 'I weep because after me there has been sent (as Prophet) a young man whose followers will enter Paradise in greater numbers than my followers.'

Then Gabriel ascended with me to the seventh heaven and asked for its gate to be opened. It was asked, 'Who is it?' Gabriel replied, 'Gabriel.' It was asked, 'Who is accompanying you?' Gabriel replied, 'Muhammad.' It was asked, 'Has he been called?' Gabriel replied in the affirmative. Then it was said, 'He is welcomed. What an excellent visit his is!'

So when I went (over the seventh heaven), there I saw Abraham, Gabriel said (to me), 'This is your father; pay your greetings to him.' So I greeted him and he returned the greetings to me and said, 'You are welcomed, O pious son and pious Prophet.'

Then I was made to ascend to Sidrat-al-Muntaha (i.e. the Lote Tree of the utmost boundary) Behold! Its fruits were like the jars of Hajr (i.e. a place near Medina) and its leaves were as big as the ears of elephants. Gabriel said, 'This is the Lote Tree of the utmost boundary. Behold! There ran four rivers, two were hidden and two were visible. I asked, 'What are these two kinds of rivers, O Gabriel?' He replied, 'As for the hidden rivers, they are two rivers in Paradise and the visible rivers are the Nile and the Euphrates.'

Then al-Bayt al-Ma'mur (i.e. the Sacred House) was shown to me and a container full of wine and another full of milk and a third full of honey were brought to me. I took the milk. Gabriel remarked, 'This is the Islamic religion which you and your followers are following.' Then the prayers were enjoined on me: They were fifty prayers a day. When I returned, I passed by Moses who

asked (me), 'What have you been ordered to do?' I replied, 'I have been ordered to offer fifty prayers a day.' Moses said, 'Your followers cannot bear fifty prayers a day, and by Allah, I have tested people before you, and I have tried my level best with Banu Isra'il (in vain). Go back to your Lord and ask for reduction to lessen your followers' burden.'

So I went back, and Allah reduced ten prayers for me. Then again I came to Moses, but he repeated the same as he had said before. Then again I went back to Allah and He reduced ten more prayers. When I came back to Moses he said the same, I went back to Allah and He ordered me to observe ten prayers a day. When I came back to Moses, he repeated the same advice, so I went back to Allah and was ordered to observe five prayers a day. When I came back to Moses, he said, 'What have you been ordered?' I replied, 'I have been ordered to observe five prayers a day.'"

Al-Isra' Wal-Mi'raj

There is a dispute amongst the Fuqaha as to when exactly al-Isra' Wal Mi'raj occurred. Scholars differ as to whether it occurred prior to the first pledge of Al-Aqabah or whether it occurred between the first and second pledges. The established understanding is that it occurred definitely before the second pledge of Al-Aqabah and the majority of scholars say that it occurred between the two pledges¹⁴⁴. There is also a dispute amongst the Fuqaha whether the Isra' wal Miraj was undertaken by the Prophet (saw) by both body and soul, or whether it was only by his soul, in the form of a dream. The strongest opinion is that the Prophet's (saw) travel constituted both his soul and his body (i.e. they are one and cannot be separated).

Despite the fact that Quraysh were against the da'wah the Prophet was calling towards and tried to restrict and subvert it by all means

¹⁴⁴ Ibn Hazm states that the Isra' wal-Mi'raj occurred in Rajab of the twelfth year after Prophethood. Whereas, Ibn al -Jawzi holds that it occurred 8 months prior to al-Hijrah.

possible, when they came to know about the event of al-'Isra, they offered the Prophet (saw) a platform to speak about his experience. They were convinced that what the Prophet (saw) was claiming to have done was impractical, impossible and that it would show the Muslims the absurdity of their Messenger and his claims. As a result of this event, around one third of the Muslims left the Deen and apostatised.

Some of these returned back to the fold of Islam when a handful of travellers, that the Prophet (saw) met on his trip, arrived back in Makkah and described their encounter with him. It is reported in Bukhari that Jabir ibn Abdullah heard the Prophet (saw) say, *"When Quraysh disbelieved in me (about the Isra'), I stood up in al-Hijr (a part of the Ka'bah) and Allah displayed Bayt al-Maqdis to me. So I began to describe its features to them whilst I was looking at it."*

Upon hearing about al-'Isra' wa al-Mi'raj, Abu Bakr (ra) stood firm saying, *"By Allah! If he (saw) had said it (about al-'Isra') he must be truthful for I have believed him in his claims that revelation descends upon him from the Seven Heavens during the night. This latter matter is by far greater than what you are now wondering."* Since he had no hesitation in the belief of the Prophethood of Muhammad (saw) and had *Sakina* (tranquillity) in this, anything that he (saw) would say would thus be the truth. Following this event, he gained the honour of being known as *as-Sideeque*, the truthful, due to his uncompromising and unwavering belief in Allah, the Messenger (saw) and the Qur'an.

With this momentous and extraordinary journey, Allah (swt) tested the Muslims severely; filtering out those that were not totally committed to the call from those who were willing to commit their lives and die for it. This was a tremendous trial from Allah to the Believers since it came at a critical time for the Prophet (saw) who was seeking the Nussrah and at a time when he needed each and every Muslim's support for their inevitable Hijra.

The Pledge of Al-Aqabah

The First pledge of Al-Aqabah

The six from Yathrib who met the Prophet (saw) embraced Islam in the sixth season of the month of al-Hajj in the 11th Year of Prophethood. They promised that they would pass his message to their people back in Yathrib. In the following year, Year 12 of Prophethood (621CE), twelve men consisting of five from the original six (except Jabr Ibn Abdillah) returned to meet the Messenger Muhammad (saw).

Of the seven from the new delegation, five were from the tribe of Khazraj, and they included Mu'az Ibn Harith, Zakrwan Ibn Abdul Quash, Yazeed Ibn Tha'matha, Ubadah Ibn Musayb and Al Abbas Ibn Ubadah. The remaining two who were from al-'Aus were Abu Hathum Ibn Litiham and Uwayyah Ibn Muthabad. The Prophet (saw) met them on the mountain of Al-Aqabah. After accepting the call of the Prophet (saw), they gave him the *Bayah an-Nisa*¹⁴⁵. The Bayah was called this as it represented the pledge of harmony and of no conflict between Aus and Khazraj.

Imaam Bukhari reported on the authority of Ubadah Ibn Musayb that the Prophet (saw) said, *"Come on! Give me allegiance! That you do not associate anything with Allah (swt). (That) you will not steal, you will never commit adultery, you will never bury nor kill your children, you will never bring any corruption whether it is committed by your hands or your feet and you will not disobey me in any Ma'ruf (good matter). Whomever fulfils this, Allah (swt) will reward him and whomever falls into any of these sins, Allah*

¹⁴⁵ It is also referred to as 'the first pledge of Aqabah' or 'the pledge of women' even though there were no women present.

(swt) will punish him here in this Dunya (life) and that will become his pardon for the hereafter. Whomever commits the haram of these (actions) and a Muslim conceals it Allah (swt) will conceal him and it is up to Allah whether He wishes to punish or save him." Abu Bardah said, *"We gave allegiance to what he called us to"*.

After the first Bayah Al-Aqabah had been conducted and the season of Hajj had just finished, the Prophet of Allah (saw) sent the first ambassadors of Islam with the visiting party to Madinah, to teach the Muslims about the Shari'ah and to spread Islam to the non-Muslims therein. The Prophet (saw) chose for this mission, Musab Ibn Umayr. Musab went to Madinah as a guest to the people and was asked to stay at the house of As'ad Ibn Zurarah. When Musab had settled there he began to co-ordinate the da'wah and the spreading of Islam throughout Madinah. Musab Ibn Umayr was known amongst the Sahabah as *Al-Muqri*, 'The Reciter', as exemplified in the following narration.

Asad Ibn Zurarah along with Musab Ibn Umayyar one day went to visit the houses of Bani Abd Al Ashal as well as Bani Zafar; both places being located in close proximity to each other. Along their way, they met with some people near the well of Marak, amongst them was Sa'd Ibn Mu'ad and Usayd Ibn Hudair. Sa'd Ibn Mu'ad and Usayd Ibn Hudair were both from the tribe of Abd Al Ashal and were Mushriks. Sa'd said to Usayd, *"Go to these two men who have come ridiculing us and remove them! Prevent them from coming (anywhere near) here."* Usayd replied, *"Asad Ibn Zurarah is my cousin. If that were not the case I would stop them."* Usayd unwillingly took his spear and went to the Muslims.

When Asad saw his cousin approaching, he said to Musab, *"That is the leader of his people. When he comes here speak (only) the truth (of Islam) to him."* Musab began to speak. Not wanting to listen, Usayd then swore at Musab saying, *"How dare you come here! Have you come here to brainwash our weak people? Leave us (for) we have no need for you!"* Musab

replied, *"Perhaps if you sit (a little) and if you are happy with what you hear (from us) you can accept it. If you dislike it we will leave you."* Usayd said, *"That seems fair enough"* and threw down his spear into the ground and sat and listened to Musab talking about Islam and reciting the Qur'an. Usayd said, *"What beautiful words I have heard! What does somebody have to do if they want to enter your Deen?"* They replied that he needed to purify himself by making Wudu, clean his clothes, testify to the truth and pray two Rak'ah of prayer. Asad later said, *"By God we knew from his face that he had accepted Islam before he even spoke. His face became very bright and he began to smile."*

After Usayd performed his rituals he said, *"Behind me is a man who is the leader of his people, I will send him to you, his name is Sa'd."* Usayd returned back to Sa'd and when Sa'd saw him he said *"O Usayd! By God! This man has come back with a different face than when he left us. What did you do? Did you speak with those two men?"* He replied, *"I spoke with them, I did not think they had any strength. I said to them leave and they said that they would do whatever you asked of them."* Those of Bani Haritha who were also present said, *"Wait! These people have not left. Let us go and kill them."* They went to the two with a desire to kill them; but when they realized that of one them was Usayd's cousin they thought twice (about doing this) as they feared Usayd's response.

Sa'd became angry and shouted, *"You do not want to throw them out or kill them because of Usayd! I will go myself (and deal with them)."* He took his spear and went all the way to meet the Muslims. When the Muslims saw him approaching they were at ease believing that Usayd had sent Sa'd to meet them about Islam; not in fact knowing that he was coming to kill them. When Sa'd came into their presence he swore at them and said, *"O Asad! By God! Just because we have some kind of blood relationship I will not be part of this corruption. Have you come to this household to tell us something that we dislike?"* The two managed to convince Sa'd to sit and

listen to them, and again, just like for Usayd, Sa'd was intrigued by what he heard and entered into Islam.

Sa'd then returned to his people and they said, *"Look! By God! This man has (also) come back with a different face to the one he us left with."* Sa'd arose and called out to his people, *"O Bani Abd Al Ashal! How have you known me?"* They replied, *"You are our Master! You are the best noble (amongst us)! The best man of opinion and the one who is firm! The one who has the best Nafs and action!"* Sa'd continued, *"For me to speak with your men and your women is prohibited until you embrace Islam and believe in Allah and his Messenger."*

As a result of this speech and the tireless and fearless work of both Musab and Asad ibn Zurarah, everyone that night embraced Islam becoming Muslim save one man, Al-Usayram who delayed his testimony until the day of Uhud. Having embraced Islam that day, Usayram immediately went to fight in the battle of Uhud and attained martyrdom. Usayram did not even complete a single Sujood or Rakah in prayer for Allah (swt), yet the Prophet (saw) said in response *"Indeed, he did so little yet he gained such a great reward."*

Musab continued to be hosted by Asad Ibn Zurarah in Yathrib and they would call people to Islam until scores of men and women had embraced their call. All houses in Yathrib including those of Banu Umayyah, Khutma, Wa'il, and the poet Qu'as Nul Aswat continued to hear about Islam until the Hijra took place.

During the Hajj season of the 13th year of Prophethood, Musab Ibn Umayyar returned to Makkah to carry the good news to the Prophet (saw) as to how the tribes of Yathrib received the call. He also explained how willing they were to give the Muslims the Nussrah.

In the same year the Muslims of Yathrib arrived to perform the Hajj. Amongst them were 74 men and two women. They said to each other, *"How can we live peacefully in Yathrib with full protection and we see the Prophet (saw) hiding himself in the mountains of Makkah in fear that he may be attacked? How can we accept this? For how long can he be left like this?"* So they went to the Prophet to discuss this matter organising to meet him (saw) during the three days it took to travel between Arafat and Mina. The exact location was chosen to be at mount Aqabah in Mina.

The Second Pledge of Al-Aqabah

Imaam Ahmed reported on the authority of Jaabir, *"We said 'O Rasoolullah! Upon what are we giving you Bay'ah?' He (saw) said, 'To listen and obey in times of zeal and apathy; to spend your wealth in hardship and ease; to command good and forbid evil; to carry it (the message) and to disregard people's reproach and accusations. To give me power when I come to you and protect me the way you protect your servants and your children. In return for (all) this you will have Jannah.'"*

When they were informed of the conditions of the Bay'ah, two men from amongst those who had embraced Islam during the first pledge stood up and confirmed the responsibility and dangers of the Bay'ah.

Ibn Ishaq reported that when they gathered together for the allegiance, Al-Abbas Bin Abdul Muttalib said, *"Do you know on what basis you are giving the Ba'yah?"* They replied, *"Yes, we know."* He continued, *"Verily you are giving him Ba'yah to fight the black and the white from amongst the people. And when you see that your money has been forsaken and that you have calamity in your wealth and your noble people have been killed and your family and children are suffering are you going to give him up? If you desire that now, by God he is with his own people already under protection! And If you do so, you will attain the humiliation of this life and the next. However, if you think that you will fulfil your promise; even if your wealth has been forsaken and your nobles are killed, that is for you the goodness in this life and*

in the Hereafter.” They replied, “We will take Him (Muhammad) to our side and we will give him the Ba’yah and the support, even if it costs us the loss of our wealth, our family and even if our respected noble people are killed.” They then turned to Rasoolullah and said, “O Rasoolullah! What will we get in return for this?” He (saw) said, “Jannah! You will get paradise.” They asked for Rasoolullah’s (saw) hand and one after another put theirs over it offering allegiance.

Asad Bin Zurarah took the hand of Rasoolullah, and said to his companions, “Be at ease, O people of Yathrib! We did not travel all this way upon our camels, except knowing and believing this man to be the Messenger of Allah. We know as well that when we met with this man today we were going to be in disagreement and conflict with all other Arabs, the best amongst us will be killed and the sword will rise against all of us. If you are going to stand and be firm in this commitment, take this man with you, and God will reward you. If, however, you are worried about yourself or you have any fear in your heart, leave him and this will be a better excuse for you in the ‘eyes’ of Allah (swt).”

The confirmation of the Bay’ah was by the shaking of each persons hands in acceptance between the two parties. Imaam Ahmed reported that after Asad Bin Zurarah spoke the people asked him, “O Asad! Cease your tongue (speech)! We will never leave this matter and we will give the Bay’ah (at once).” In the narration reported by Jabir, he said, “We stood up and we gave Ba’yah one after another” and to each one Muhammad (saw) would say, “And in return for you is Paradise.” The two women present repeated the Bay’ah verbally, but did not shake the hand of Rasoolullah (saw), since A’iesha (ra) reported that the Prophet Muhammad (saw) never shook the hand of any non-mahram (foreign) woman.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁶ It is narrated by Umaymah bint Ruqayqah, “I went to the Messenger of Allah (saw) with the women who took an oath of allegiance with him in Islam. They said, “Messenger of Allah! We take a pledge with you not to associate anything with Allah, not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to kill our children, nor to produce any lied

The Choosing of Twelve Naqeeb from the Ansar

After the 2nd pledge had been fulfilled, the Messenger Muhammad (saw) chose from amongst those who offered the pledge, twelve *Naqeeb* (those who have responsibility and authority over the people) in order to execute the transfer of power to him. Rasoolullah (saw) said, *"Bring from among yourselves twelve people. They must be in a position of authority over the people and must represent them."* They chose twelve, nine from the tribe of Khazraj and three from Al-Aws. From Khazraj they were: Nuqabah, As'ad Bin Zurarah, Sa'd Ibn Rabi', Abdullah Bin Rawahah, Rafi' Bin Malik, Al-Barah Bin Ma'rour, Abdullah Ibn Amru, Ubadah Ibn As-Saamit, Sa'd Bin Ubaadah, Al-Munzir Bin Amru, and from the Aws: Usayd Bin Hudayr, Sa'd Bin Khaythama and Rufa' Bin Abdur-Munzir. When the twelve were chosen, Muhammad (saw) took another oath from them to be leaders of the people. He (saw) said, *"Here they are! You have authority over your people. You are my Ansar and my guarantor for your people the way the Hawayireen (Disciples) were that for Isa (as) and I will be in authority over the Muslims. Do you agree to this?"* In reply they said, *"Yes!"*

Ubaada bin As-Saamit said, *"I was one of the Naqibs¹⁴⁷ who gave the (Aqabah) pledge of allegiance to Allah's Messenger (saw). We gave the pledge of allegiance to him that we would not worship anything other than Allah, would not steal, would not commit illegal sexual intercourse, would not kill a person whose killing Allah has made illegal except rightfully, would not rob each other, and we would not be promised Paradise if we did the above sins, that we have devised between our hands and feet, and not to disobey you in what is known."* The Messenger of Allah (saw) said, *'In what you can do and are able.'* They said, *'Allah and His Messenger are more merciful to us than ourselves. Come! Let us give our hands to you, Messenger of Allah!'* The Messenger of Allah (saw) said, *'I do not shake hands with women. My word to a hundred women is like my word to one woman.'*[Muwatta] then if we

¹⁴⁷ *Naqib* is a leader, in this context a General that controlled a part of the army of Madinah.

committed one of the above sins, Allah will give His judgement concerning it."¹⁴⁸

The Prophet (saw) eventually concluded with the following statement; *"My blood is with your blood, and my place of burying is with yours. I am with you and you are with me. I will wage war against those with whom you will fight, and I will sign a treaty of peace with those who will sign a treaty of peace with you."*¹⁴⁹

The Prophet (saw) had thus selected the twelve *Naqibs* who, through the subsequent bloodless coup, would eventually lead to the establishment of the first Islamic State in which the Prophet (saw) assumed the position of ruler and began ruling by Islam.¹⁵⁰

Rumours of the Meeting Begin to Spread

When this agreement had been accepted and the people rose in order to leave, it has been reported that one from amongst the Shayateen heard about the meeting and climbed to the top of a mountain shouting, *"O People of Makkah! Muhammad and all of the youth and the deviants are here with him. They have gathered together in order to fight you."* Muhammad (saw) said, *"That is the Shaytaan of this hill. O enemy of Allah! By Allah I will deal with you."* Rasoolullah (saw) then asked for the meeting to be dispersed and for the attendees to leave as quickly as possible. When they heard the voice of the Shaytaan, Al-Abbas Bin Ubadah said, *"By the One who sent you with the Truth! If you wish we can go now to the people of Mina and by tomorrow morning we will have slaughtered them."* Rasoolullah (saw) replied, *"Allah has neither ordered us nor permitted us to fight. Return to your caravans and go back to your homes."*

¹⁴⁸ Saheeh Al-Bukhari, Volume 5, Hadith 233

¹⁴⁹ Al-Bidaayah, Volume 3, p.158

¹⁵⁰ Al-Bidaayah, Volume 3, p.160

The next morning the Ansar left. News broke out regarding the meeting and eventually the Quraysh came to learn about it. Some from amongst them began to speak about it, others became sad realising the potential consequences of this allegiance on their own lives and wealth since they had suppressed, tortured, labelled and killed many of the Muslims for over thirteen years. They chose from amongst them a leader, who they sent in order to meet with those who came from Yathrib, to protest at what had happened. He came to them and said, *"O people of Khazraj! It has come to our attention that you came here to meet with some deviants from amongst our people and that you want to take them with you, and to make him (Muhammad) a leader and that you gave him a pledge to fight us. By God! We, from amongst the Arab tribes, hate nothing more than to go to war with you."* Those who listened to the delegate were amongst the Arab Mushriks who had no idea of the representation sent to Muhammad (saw) and thus they began to swear by their gods and idols that such an agreement had not taken place. The delegates then went to Abdullah Ibn Salool who confirmed this and said, *"This matter is completely untrue. Nobody from my people has conducted such a thing and they will never commit such a thing. As I am in charge of Yathrib, the people there will tell me who tried to represent us."*

The Muslims, who were amongst the camp of the people of Khazraj, hid their Islam and looked at each other in astonishment remaining silent, neither denying nor affirming that such a meeting had taken place. The Quraysh, inclining towards the testimony of Abdullah Ibn Salool, decided to leave the matter.

Both sides returned to their respective peoples, reassured and satisfied that no plot had actually taken place. However, murmurings amongst the people continued so much so that the people felt uneasy and began to seek out anyone who had any feelings of sorrow or support for the Muslims.

Of the people sought out were but a few. However, they included Sa'd Bin Ubaadah, Al-Munzir Bin Amru and their followers. When Sa'd Bin Ubaadah was arrested, they tied his hands to his neck and beat him dragging him across the desert with his hair entering into Makkah. Al-Mutair Abd' Adi and Al-Harith Ibn Harab were Mushriks who witnessed this event and since Sa'd used to give refuge and support to their caravans whenever it would pass by Madinah to Bilad Al-Sham, they intervened securing his release because of his past favours upon them. Despite the news eventually being leaked, we can understand that the taking of Nussrah from the people of authority is meant to be performed privately and in secret so that nobody, even those from amongst their own people, are aware of what has taken place.

Allah (swt) Bestows Victory

Vital lessons can be learnt from the actions of the Prophet (saw) not only in terms of the commands of Allah to undertake particular actions, but also in terms of the perseverance and trust in Allah. Muslims are reminded that they should trust in Allah alone and have complete faith that He will give victory for the establishment of his deen whenever and wherever He (swt) wills. Muslims are commanded to be optimistic by Allah;

وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزِنُوا وَأَنْتُمُ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

"Faint not nor grieve, for you will overcome them if you are (indeed) believers."¹⁵¹

And on many other occasions Allah (swt) guides the Muslims to remain patient in his cause and not to give up or compromise, and continue their righteous actions by adhering to Allah's commands;

¹⁵¹ Al-Qur'an - Surah Ale-Imraan, 3:139

إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ
وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ

“Verily Man is in loss. Except such as have faith and do righteous deeds and (join together) in the mutual teaching of Truth and of Patience and Constancy.”¹⁵²

Allah tested his beloved messenger for many years before bestowing victory to him, so it would be naive to think that we are any better than the messenger of Allah and his companions. On the contrary Allah warns us that there are many tests the Muslims will have to face, and they should be ready to sacrifice;

أَحَسِبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا آمَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ

“Do people think that they will be left alone because they say: ‘We believe’ and will not be tested?”¹⁵³

Seeking Nussrah to Implement the Shari’ah Today

The situation that Muslims live in today is not very different from the situation of the Prophet (saw) and the companions in Makkah. Every country in the world today implements Kufr. Even the countries with Muslim populations implement Kufr. Muslims are therefore obliged to change the situation to one in which Shari’ah is implemented, because the command to implement the Shari’ah is general. Muslims are obliged to abide by Islam wherever they are and hence the nature of this duty is classified as Fard Ayn.¹⁵⁴ Within this duty there is the command for Muslims to implement Allah’s Law over the society and not be under the authority of the Kufaar.

¹⁵² Al-Qur’an - Surah Al-Asr, 103:2-3

¹⁵³ Al-Qur’an - Surah Al-Ankaboot, 29:2

¹⁵⁴ Fard Ayn is defined as “An individual obligation whose fulfilment is demanded of each and every mukallaf individually” Usool ul Fiqh, Muhammad al-Khudari, p.39

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِتَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِمَا أَرَاكَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَكُنْ
لِلْخَائِنِينَ خَصِيمًا

*"Surely, We have sent down to you the Book (this Qur'an) in truth that you might judge between men by that which Allah has shown you."*¹⁵⁵

وَأَنِ احْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَاحْذَرْهُمْ أَنْ يَفْتِنُوكَ عَنْ
بَعْضِ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُصِيبَهُمْ بِبَعْضِ
ذُنُوبِهِمْ وَإِنْ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ النَّاسِ لَفَاسِقُونَ

*"And so judge between them by what Allah has revealed and follow not their vain desires, but beware of them lest they turn you far away from some of that which Allah has sent down to you."*¹⁵⁶

The way in which Muslims can implement Shari'ah varies on the aspect of Shari'ah that is to be implemented. There are many *ahkam* that can be implemented by an individual in his daily life such as the five daily prayers, or the avoidance of prohibited foodstuffs. However there are many other *ahkam* of Allah that cannot be fulfilled by an individual, such as the lashing of the fornicator or ordering offensive jihad. To implement these aspects of the Shari'ah, it is necessary to appoint a leader who would then undertake the necessary means to carry out these neglected duties.

¹⁵⁵ Al-Qur'an - Surah An-Nisaa, 4:105

¹⁵⁶ Al-Qur'an - Surah A'-Ma'ida, 5:49

Ubaada bin As-Saamit said, "I was one of the Naqibs who gave the (al-Aqabah) pledge of allegiance to Allah's messenger (saw). We gave the pledge of allegiance to him..."¹⁵⁷

There is no other ruling institution stipulated by the Shari'ah except the Khilafah, and as such, the way to implement Islam is by appointing a Khaleefah.

As Shah Walli Ullah¹⁵⁸ says, "Now since all these tasks cannot be accomplished without installing a Khaleefah and since whatever is a necessary condition for the discharge of a collective obligation is also a collective obligation, therefore, the establishment of the Khilafah is a collective obligation."¹⁵⁹

To appoint a Khaleefah requires authority and if the authority is not with the Muslims, then the method to get the authority must be followed because, authority is a divine pre-requisite for the appointment of a Khaleefah. By divine pre-requisite, it means that it is not a rational step; rather Allah (swt) has obliged the Muslims to have the authority.

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ
عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَتَّبِعِ الرَّسُولَ
مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمَا كَانَ
اللَّهُ لِيُضِيعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرؤُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

¹⁵⁷ Saheeh Al-Bukhari, Volume 5, Hadith 233

¹⁵⁸ Shah Walli Ullahs real name was Qutb ud deen Ahmad. He died in 1176 Hijri in the Indian Subcontinent.

¹⁵⁹ Izaalat al Khafaa' an Khilafat al -Khulafah, Volume 1, p.15

"Thus have We made of you an ummah justly balanced that you might be witnesses over the nations and the messenger a witness over yourselves..."¹⁶⁰

الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ بِكُمْ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فَتْحٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ قَالُوا أَلَمْ نَكُن مَّعَكُمْ وَإِنْ
كَانَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ نَصِيبٌ قَالُوا أَلَمْ نَسْتَحِذْ عَلَيْكُمْ وَنَمْنَعُكُم مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فَاللَّهُ
يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَنْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا
*"...And never will Allah grant to the unbelievers authority
over the believers."¹⁶¹*

The link between the taking of the authority and the implementation is a *shart sharie*, meaning divine condition in the same way that *wudu* is a divine condition to perform *salat*.

And the example of the holy Prophet (saw) is ample to understand how the Nussrah must be sought.

These ayat are clear that the Muslims must be the ones in authority. The authority for Islam was only taken once by the messenger of Allah (saw), and he followed a specific divine way to get this authority.

The Way to Seek Nussrah

This seeking of support needs to be done as a collective duty. The obligation of taking authority in order to implement Islam is *Fard Kifaaya*¹⁶² until the time limit for this obligation is exceeded. This time limit is three days after which the obligation transforms into *Fard Kifaaya Muhattum*. During the time that the obligation is *Fard Kifaaya*, it

¹⁶⁰ Al-Qur'an - Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:143

¹⁶¹ Al-Qur'an - Surah An-Nisaa, 4:141

¹⁶² *Fard Kifaaya* is defined as a "Collective obligation whose fulfilment is demanded from the mukhallafs collectively" Usool ul Fiqh, Muhammad al-Khudari, p.39

remains an obligation upon all but does not require every individual to be involved. It is acceptable for only some to be involved only. After the expiration of the time limit, the obligation has an added element of urgency and falls upon every capable and responsible Muslim. The method to fulfil this task will share the same hukm as the objective, according to the general Shari'ah principles. In real terms, it requires the formation of a collective body who can seek Nussrah from those who maintain the balance of power.

It is necessary for every individual of the collective to undertake this responsibility. The obligation of seeking the Nussrah can be undertaken by seeking the people of power, building close relations with them and finally, by introducing them to the 'Ulema who then can directly seek the support. The direct seeking is carried out by visiting those who have and maintain the balance of power in a particular land, with a view to comprehend the available resources and share in the vision of the emergence of an Islamic State. The indirect seeking is classified as the introduction to the obligation and is done by introducing the relevant people to someone more learned and knowledgeable in Islam, who can ask them for the power.

Preparation for Hijrah

When the Bay'ah had been completed and the Muslims of the Ansar successfully returned to Madinah, they tactically surrounded the whole of the city. Each division of the army was based on the outskirts restricting the passage and movement of people or trade. In doing so, the Muslims established the first power base in the heart of the desert, directly opposed to the Kufr regimes and the corruption found elsewhere throughout the Arabian Peninsula. This was recorded in history as one of the most exciting times for the Muslims as now they were able to demonstrate the magnificence of Islam and this event was the just the beginning in the massive expansion of the da'wah. When the control of Madinah was in the hands of the Muslims, Allah (swt) ordered the Prophet (saw) to begin the migration to Yathrib, *al-Hijrah*.

The Hijrah did not solely mean that the Muslims were going to sacrifice their wealth or lives for the sake of their benefit; rather the Hijrah was the fulfilment of a duty for the sake of Allah (swt) alone. Therefore the Muslims left Makkah in pursuit of the pleasure of Allah (swt) leaving behind everything and in full *Tawakkul* (reliance) in the Decision of Allah (swt). They migrated from Madinah as commanded by their Creator, not knowing what ordeals they were to face and knowing that their futures and aspirations remained uncertain. They realised that despite the fact they were to leave Makkah, the hatred and despise shown by the Quraysh towards them would mean that the Quraysh would either try to pursue them on their journey or would make life as difficult as possible for them in their new lives in Madinah.

Difficulties Faced by the First to Leave

Abu Salamah was one of the first few Muhajireen to leave Makkah for Madinah. He made Hijrah a year before the Bay'ah Al-Aqabah was conducted and intended to leave with his wife and his child. When he gathered all of his belongings and was preparing to leave, his in-laws said to him, *"Now your own desires have over taken you and made you turn against us! Can you not see what you are doing? Why are you leaving? Why should we allow you to leave like this? Where are you going to?"* Abu Salamah replied, *"I must go!"* They replied, *"You cannot go and take our daughter with you!"* Abu Salamah's parents, who also were present, added, *"We cannot let you go and take your son with you; because your son is our son. We must take him! When you leave us, leave your son behind."* Abu Salamah was unhappy with this and kept his son with him. However, his in-laws tried to grab Salamah, his son and in the ensuing struggle Salamah's shoulder was dislocated and he began to cry. Abu Salamah had no choice but to leave the baby behind and so departed Makkah without any of his family to accompany him.

When Abu Salamah left Makkah, Umm Salamah, his wife, would go each morning to a place called Abtah and would weep until nightfall, continuing like this for a whole year until her family began to take pity upon her. Some of her family members began to ask, *"Let the woman go! Why do you separate her from her husband and her husband from his son?"* So the family of Abu Salamah, realising their mistake restored her son to her and said, *"You can go to your husband if you wish."*

Umm Salamah took her son and a camel and immediately set out alone to Madinah. She underwent a trip of 500km, with her baby son with no one to either accompany or guide her to Madinah. She rode through the desert until she reached an area called Tan'im where she met Uthman Ibn Talha from Bani Abdul-Dar. He recognised her and knew of her situation and so decided to help her to Yathrib. Having escorted her to the village of Quba in Madinah he said, *"Your husband lives in this*

village, enter it in the Name of Allah (swt)" and he left her there and returned back to Makkah.

Suhayb and Quraysh

Another case of hardship endured by the Muslims was when Suhayb wanted to perform the Hijrah to Madinah. The Quraysh came to him saying, *"You came to us when you were homeless, poor and a beggar and now (because of us) you have amassed tremendous wealth and you have attained a position where you are now well known! Do you want to emigrate and take your wealth with you? By God we will never permit this!"* Suhayb replied, *"What do you say if I leave all of my wealth and property (behind for you)? Will you then leave me alone?"* They replied, *"Yes! We will then leave you to go."* Suhayb then answered, *"Then I give you all of my wealth!"* When the Prophet (saw) heard about the exchange between Suhayb and the Quraysh he (saw) exclaimed, *"Indeed he has made a profit! Indeed he has made a profit! Indeed he has made a profit!"*

Umar, Ai'ash bin Abi Rabiya and Hisham

Another example of hardship was when Umar, Ai'ash Bin Abi Rabiya and Hisham Abdul Ars' agreed to undertake the Hijrah together. Between them they arranged to meet at Umar's house. But when the time came to depart only Umar and Ai'ash were present since Hisham was prevented from leaving by his tribe. Umar and Ai'ash left Makkah, without Hisham, for Madinah and finally arrived in the village of Quba where they met Ai'ash's brothers Abu Jahl and Al-Harith. They said to him, *"Our mother has sworn an oath that she will never comb her hair nor go outside in the daytime in the sun until she sees you!"* Upon hearing this Ai'ash felt sad, Umar, trying to reassure him said, *"O Ai'ash! By God these people want to make Fitnah for your Deen so be careful of them. By God! If your mother has lice in her hair she will use the comb and if it becomes a very dark (and gloomy) day she will go out and if she stays under the heat of the sun all day and becomes very hot she will take shade!"* But Ai'ash insisted to accompany his brothers and honour his mother by seeing her. Umar

then replied, *"Now that you have made this resolution you must undertake it. Take my camel, as it is a very good and subservient camel. Ride it and if your people make conspiracy against you, save yourself and escape with it as she is very fast!"*

So Ai'ash returned with his brothers to see their mother. When they had reached half way on the journey between Madinah and Makkah Abu Jahl said, *"O son of my mother! My camel has become difficult to ride and is unable to carry me; can you let me ride your camel?"* Ai'ash agreed and stopped in the middle of the road and dismounted from the camel given to him by Umar. When all three brothers had dismounted and were standing on the road, Abu Jahl and Al-Harith pounced on Ai'ash and tied him up. They tied him up and dragged him back to Makkah and were yelling as they entered, *"O people of Makkah! Look at what we have done! We have captured one of those extremists! We have detained him!"*

As a result of films such as 'The Message', the common perception amongst the Muslims today is that of the Hijrah being an event where the Muslims simply left their homes in Makkah and travelled to their new found homes in Madinah. The few examples shown above, dispel the theory that the Hijrah was made in such luxurious circumstances; rather they suffered many tribulations concocted by the Mushriks desperate in making the journey from Makkah to Madinah as difficult and arduous as possible.

These trials tested the Imaan¹⁶³ of the Muslims and demonstrated their full conviction and faith in Islam and in Allah (swt); since they were willing to sacrifice all of their wealth and even their own families solely for the sake of Islam and to spread the da'wah in Madinah. In spite of

¹⁶³ *Imaan* – (lit. belief) defined by Muhammad (saw) as, *"To believe in Allah, the Angels, the Messengers, the Hereafter and that the Divine Destiny of both good and bad is with Allah (swt)"* [Muslim] Imaan includes both sayings and actions and consequently increases with obedience to Allah (swt) and decreases with sin.

the actions of Quraysh, the Muslims continued to make the emigration to Yathrib either individually or in small inconspicuous groups, following each other through the scorching, oppressive desert until they reached their destination. The arduous Hijrah continued for two months and a few days from the day of the second pledge of Aqabah, until only the Prophet (saw), Abu Bakr (ra) and Ali (ra), who had been ordered to delay their travel, and the Muslims who had been detained by the Quraysh, remained in Makkah. Most of the Muslims who initially migrated to Abyssinia for their safety eventually followed suite and made a second Hijrah to Madinah when they heard that the Muslims of Makkah had left for their new lives there.

Imaam Bukhari reported on the authority of A'iesha (ra) that she said, *"The Prophet (saw) said to the Muslims, 'Verily I can see the homeland of your Hijrah. It is a place full of dates between Bana Labitan (a place that is renowned for having black rocks) and surrounding the city are two mountains occupied by black stones.'"*

Abu Bakr (ra) Prepares for Hijrah

Abu Bakr was preparing his horse for Hijrah when Muhammad (saw) saw him and said, *"Be at rest Abu Bakr! I am waiting for permission from Allah (swt) (to leave); and if you wish you can have a very good companion to travel with you. Just have patience!"* Abu Bakr said, *"Do you really want to take me with you? I am willing to sacrifice my life for you, O Prophet of Allah (saw)!"* The Prophet replied, *"Yes."* So both Abu Bakr and the Prophet Muhammad (saw) stayed in Makkah waiting for the permission of Allah (swt) to make Hijrah.

The Consequences of the Hijrah for Quraysh

The news that the Muslims were making Hijrah to Madinah and leaving behind everything, including their families and possessions, reached the Quraysh. They saw a people who were willing to sacrifice everything in order to spread the da'wah and a nation who had the

strength of mind that would be unparalleled with any army they would fight. The Muslims had become an immense threat to the Quraysh's interests; affecting their economy by stopping the exploitation of the poor and the travellers by the rich, they called for an end to their social system, classifying it as null and void, they even affected Quraysh's foreign relations with other countries. The Quraysh realised that the Muslims were beginning to establish themselves in Yathrib and that Islam was beginning to be implemented on a socio-societal level. The fact that Muhammad (saw) had united and gained support from senior figures from amongst both the Aus and Khazraj, who were initially arch enemies, demonstrated to them that the Muslims had managed to combine together both the power of the sword, which gained them authority over the people, and the power of the thought which gained them access to the hearts and the minds of the people. They witnessed how the Muslims had support from the general public as well as support from the Ansar, who provided the Muslims with their military prowess and might.

They also feared for the geographic location of Yathrib being so close to the trade routes of As-Sham. This would mean that the Muslims could easily attack and capture their caravans that would frequently travel back and forth along these trade routes. If such action were to be taken, Quraysh would effectively be held to ransom and their economy, believed to be up to a quarter of a million dinars every year, would be severely diminished. Moreover, if the Prophet (saw) himself made Hijrah and joined with the rest of the Muslims, then there was a potential that a military force could be developed and nurtured with an ultimate aim of removing the Quraysh from authority. They knew how powerful the personality of the Prophet (saw) was at affecting and coercing the hearts of the people, they knew full well that the Prophet (saw) had the qualities of leadership besides the fact that he had received Revelation from Allah (swt) and was fully determined to spread Islam. Realising that Muhammad (saw) and the Muslims were a direct threat to their

own national security the Quraysh decided to meet in order to resolve this situation once and for all.

The Mushriks Gather in Dar-Al Nadwah

The Quraysh held an emergency council in Dar Al-Nadwah on the 26th of As-Safr, 14 years after Prophethood and two and half months after the second pledge of Al-Aqabah. The chiefs, noblemen and leaders of all the tribes from the Arabian Peninsula met to decide on what action to take against the Prophet (saw). Never before in the history of the Arabs did they gather so great a number of influential people to decide on what to do. It demonstrated the true fear the Quraysh had of the Muslims and how much of a threat the Muslims were perceived to be.

Famous figures that gathered at the meeting included, Abu Jahl Ibn Hisham from Bani Mukzum, Jubair Ibn Mut'im, Tua'ma Ibn Adi and al-Harith Ibn A'mir from Bani Naufal and Shaibah and Utbah, the two sons of Rabi'ah, Abu Sufyan Ibn Harb from the people of Bani Abdul Shams and Abdul Manaaf, Al Nadr Ibn Harith from the people of Bani Abdul Dar, Abdul Bhaktari. It is reported in Saheeh Bukhari that Iblees approached the delegates in this meeting taking the figure of an old man. As he stood at the door, the people asked, *"Who is this old man?"* He replied, *"I am an old man; the Sheikh of Najd. I heard what has happened to you and I have come here to attend with you and to listen to what you want to do. And whenever you require any advice I will be there to provide it for you."*

After several hours of debate, some people put forward their arguments saying, *"Let us just throw him out (of Makkah) and not bother about him again. Wherever he wishes to go let him go. We have looked after ourselves, built ourselves up and made ourselves strong."* But the Sheikh of an-Najd (al-Iblees) said, *"No, that is not the correct opinion! You do not realise that what he (Muhammad (saw)) says is beautiful and sweet and his arguments are very strong. He is able to defeat the heart of any man and capture the hearts of*

the people. If you let him go you will be unable to deal with the consequences. He could be ready tomorrow with any of the Arab tribes! One after the other the tribes will join him, after that he will attack you and all of the tribes will follow him in returning for the control of Makkah and then he can do whatever he wishes with you. What is your opinion now?"

Abdul Bhaktari put forward his proposals, *"Let us imprison him in metal chains and then close him in leaving him there for life, the way we left many poets before him like Zuhayr Al-Nabighah and others. When he becomes old he will die a natural death in prison."* The Sheikh of Najd replied, *"No! That is not a good opinion! If you imprison him there will emerge from amongst you one who will revolt against this action and say 'why did you imprison him' and then people will start to speak about him. You will make him known more than he is now. People will sympathise and will want to release him. There will be an uprising for him and they will stop supporting you. You will then lose your strength (and authority). That is not a good opinion; think of something else!"*

The parliament agreed with the Sheikh of Najd's contribution and asked him for his opinion. Iblees suggested that the only course of action would be to assassinate the Prophet; all of the council unanimously agreed upon this. Abu Jahl Bin Hisham added, *"I have an opinion on this, and if you follow it you will never have a problem."* The people replied, *"O Abu Hakam what do say?"* He said, *"Each of our tribes will delegate a man who is young and strong and who is the son of a respected nobleman. We will give each one a sharp sword so that all of the accomplices an, in a single stroke, hit Muhammad. After they have killed him we can rest, as nobody will know who did it. His blood will be distributed amongst all of the tribes and nobody can take vengeance against all of the tribes (as no one is strong enough)."*

This being an ingenious idea, everyone in the emergency council accepted what Abu Jahl had said. He continued, *"And if they do not know*

who the killer is then we will all gather together and collect blood money for the sake of Muhammad." The Sheikh of Najd said sarcastically, *"Verily what he said is exactly what I would want to say. Indeed this man's opinion, if nothing else, is corrupted!"*

After this lengthy debate, the Mushriks unanimously voted for the law to be passed. This course of action would mean that the one who would be vital for catalysing the impact and change in Madinah, the one who carries the banner, the burden and the da'wah of Islam, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) himself would be killed. The Quraysh carefully chose the executioners from each tribe believing that the saga of Muhammad (saw) was reaching its climax and eventual end.

With such a brilliant plan, the representatives of each tribe left the Parliament and returned to their constituencies satisfied with the outcome.

Al-Hijrah of the Prophet

It is reported in Saheeh Bukhari that Jibrael (as) came to the Prophet (saw) and informed him about the conspiracy of the Quraysh to assassinate him and that Allah (swt) had now given him permission to leave Makkah and make Hijrah to Madinah. Jibrael said, "O Muhammad! This night, do not sleep in your bed as you usually do." So the Prophet (saw) decided to go to Al-Hajira, the house of Abu Bakr, to discuss the route for al-Hijrah.

A'iesha (ra) reported, "We were sitting in the house of Abu Bakr at midday, when one man said to my father (Abu Bakr), 'The Prophet of Allah (saw), is coming and he is covering his face with his scarf.' He (the Prophet) came at a time, when he did not usually come i.e. at midday. Whenever he came at this time, Abu Bakr said, 'I would sacrifice my mother and father on his behalf! I do not think he came at this time except for something important.' The Prophet of Allah (swt) then asked permission to enter. The Prophet (saw) said to Abu Bakr, 'Let everyone here leave.' Abu Bakr replied, 'They are your family. I sacrifice all of them for you, O Prophet of Allah (saw)!' He (saw) continued, 'Allah (swt) has given me permission to leave.' Abu Bakr replied, 'Please let me accompany you.' The Prophet said, 'Yes, you can be my companion.'"

The Attempted Assassination on the life of the Prophet (saw)

When the Prophet had discussed the Hijrah with Abu Bakr, he returned home and waited for nightfall. As for the assassins, they numbered eleven and they gathered together spending the whole day preparing and planning for their mission to attack Muhammad (saw). The men consisted of Abu Jahl, Al-Hakam Ibn Al-Arse, Ukbah Bin Abi-Muheet, Al-Nuthar Ibn Harith, Umayyah Ibn Khalaf, Zumar Abdul Aswad,

Tu'am Ibn Urday, Abu Lahab, Ubayh Ibn Kalaf, Nabee Ibn Hujaj and Nurabah Ibn Hujaj.

It is reported by Ibn Ishaq that when night fell, the assassins gathered together at the door of the house of Muhammad (saw) and waited for him to fall asleep so that they could pounce upon him and kill him (saw). Confident and certain that they would be successful in their operation, Abu Jahl stood with pride and arrogance saying sarcastically to his companions, *"Muhammad claims that if you follow him he will make you the Kings of the Arabs and the Ajam (non-Arabs). That you are going to be brought back after you are dead and you are going to have paradise like the paradise of Jordan and if he claims that if you don't do what he calls you for, you will be slaughtered and sent after your death to Hell-fire to burn therein. Can you believe that? That is what Muhammad is calling you to! Yet, today we are fulfilling what he has promised and we are going to slaughter him as if we were killing a bird."*

The time of the murder was set for midnight, so the assassins waited with abated breath for the time to pass intending to cut short the life of Muhammad (saw). However, Allah (swt) is the One who decides the destiny of all things and in His Hands is the power to control the Heavens and the Earth and He (swt) can do whatsoever He wishes. If He wishes to help someone then no harm can befall them. He (swt) revealed to Prophet (saw),

وَإِذْ يَمْكُرُ بِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِيُثْبِتُوكَ أَوْ يَقْتُلُوكَ أَوْ يُخْرِجُوكَ وَيَمْكُرُونَ وَيَمْكُرُ
اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَاكِرِينَ

"They have been conspiring against you, either to imprison you or to kill you, or to throw you out, and they put their

*own plot and Allah (swt) puts his own plot and Allah's (swt)
is the best of planners."*¹⁶⁴

With this revelation, Muhammad (saw) spoke to Ali Ibn Abu Taalib and said to him, "Sleep in my bed and cover yourself with my cloak. This green cloak is from Hadramawt (Yemen), as long as you are under it no harm will befall you." Muhammad (saw) left the house and, as reported by Ibn Abbas, he (saw) passed by the assassins yet they were unable to recognise him as Allah (swt) took away their sight for an instant. He (saw) grasped a handful of sand and scattered it over the heads of each of them whilst reciting verses from the Qur'an;

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ سَدًّا وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ سَدًّا فَأَغْشَيْنَاهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ

*"And We have put a barrier before them, and a barrier behind them, and We have covered them up, so that they cannot see."*¹⁶⁵

The Prophet (saw) then left them and proceeded to the house of Abu Bakr as-Siddique and from there they left together on the journey to Madinah that very night. They travelled until they reached the cave of Thawr. The conspirators remained outside the house of Muhammad (saw) until midnight as planned. One man, who was passing by, approached them and said, "What are you waiting for here?" They replied, "We are waiting for Muhammad." He said, "Shame on you! By God I saw him myself. He came out in front of you all. I was sitting across from here and I saw him. He even put sand on your heads!"

Confounded by this they put their hands on their turbans and found sand there. They said to each other, "But we did not see this happen! Perhaps the wind blew the sand onto us?" Bewildered by this, they entered

¹⁶⁴ Al-Qur'an – Surah Al-Anfaal, 8:30

¹⁶⁵ Al-Qur'an – Surah Ya Seen, 36:9

the house and saw a man sleeping with the cloak of the Prophet (saw). One of them said, *"Verily this is Muhammad! Let us kill him. He is wearing his cloak."* Another shouted, *"That is not so! It is not Muhammad, I know him well."* The assassins removed the cloak and revealed Ali (ra). Taken aback by how Muhammad (saw) managed to slip by them, they questioned Ali asking, *"Where is Muhammad?"* he replied, *"I do not know."*

This whole incident staggered Quraysh, leaving them humiliated especially after the arrogance and certainty they had shown outside the house of Muhammad (saw). They were disgraced, as again somehow Muhammad (saw) had eluded them and the plot that they had hatched in the Parliament did not bear fruit. They decided to go in immediate chase after Muhammad (saw).

The Quraysh Seek out Muhammad (saw)

On the night of 27th of Safr in the 14th year after the Prophethood, Abu Bakr As-Siddique (ra) and the Messenger (saw) left Makkah for Madinah. As soon as they departed, Quraysh began searching along the main northern road leading out of Makkah. The Prophet (saw) however, left via the lesser-known south route towards Mount Thawr, which lay in the opposite direction to Madinah. Whilst climbing Mount Thawr, the Prophet (saw) became exhausted; his bare feet were bleeding, cut by the sharp rocks. Abu Bakr, being the stronger of the two, carried Muhammad (saw) the rest of the way up the mount. After a few hours they reached the summit and approached the cave of Thawr. Muhammad (saw) said, *"Let me enter it (first)."* Abu Bakr replied, *"No. I must enter before you, as I want to make sure that nothing inside can bring harm to you. Allow me to be harmed if there is anything inside."*

So he (ra) entered and investigated the cave finding small holes in the walls. Abu Bakr began to cut from his garments pieces of cloth so that

he could fill the holes, fearful that they may harbour wild beasts or reptiles that could bring harm, until the only clothes that remained were just enough to cover his *Awrah*¹⁶⁶ from his navel to his knee. After some time Abu Bakr realised that there were still two holes left unfilled and he had no more cloth to block them with. He decided to sit on the floor leaning his back against the wall and using his feet to seal the remaining holes. Finally, satisfied that the cave was now safe, he asked the Messenger (saw) to enter. He said to Muhammad (saw), *"O Prophet of Allah (saw), lay your head on my lap and sleep."* The Prophet (saw) complied and slept there.

It is reported that during the night a snake came through one of the holes that Abu Bakr had his feet over and bit him; the pain of the venom was unbearable but he did not move his foot, lest he awake the Prophet (saw). The pain grew worse until Abu Bakr began to weep; one of the tears fell from his cheek and landed on the face of the Messenger (saw) who was asleep. The Prophet awoke and asked, *"O Abu Bakr, what is wrong with you?"* Abu Bakr replied, *"Nothing."* He (saw) then looked towards Abu Bakr's foot and noticed that his sole had turned black, he (saw) said, *"You have been bitten by a snake."* Abu Bakr replied, *"I would sacrifice my life and my mother and father for you O Prophet of Allah (swt)!"* The Messenger took some of his saliva and wiped Abu Bakr's feet with it causing the pain to resolve and the feet to instantly recover.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁶ *Awrah* – In Islamic Shari'ah defined as the parts of the body one must cover in front of a non-Mahrem or foreign person. For women it includes the whole body excepting the face and the hands. As for men, it is the part between the navel and the knee.

¹⁶⁷ It has been reported that even though Abu Bakr recovered, the venom of the snake remained in his blood until he passed away many years later. Whilst he lay in a coma on his deathbed a doctor remarked, *"By Allah (swt), this man has been poisoned by a snake and the venom is as fresh (as it was on) the first day he was bitten."*

Abu Bakr and the Prophet remained in the cave for 3 nights with Abdullah, Abu Bakr's son, occasionally visiting them. Abu Bakr instructed his servant Amir Bin Fuhayrah to look after his flock of sheep and Asma' his daughter was told to bring them food during the night.

Unable to find the Messenger Muhammad (saw) the Quraysh panicked. In order to restore some respect for their botched plan, they captured Ali ibn Abi Taalib, tied his feet together, dragged him to the Ka'bah and tortured him, in a desperate attempt to gain some information as to the whereabouts of the Messenger (saw). When the Quraysh were unable to extract any information from him they went to the house of Abu Bakr and found only Asma', his daughter there. They said to her, *"Where is your father?"* She replied, *"I do not know,"* Abu Jahl became enraged and raised his hand and slapped Asma' across the face causing her to fall to the ground, breaking her necklace in the process.

The Quraysh declared a public state of emergency and organised a meeting, inviting everyone in Makkah to attend. They announced that all routes out of Makkah whether commonly used or not be checked and monitored. They offered a reward of a hundred camels for anyone who was able to capture either Muhammad (saw) or Abu Bakr, dead or alive, increasing this to five hundred camels for both of their heads. Many bounty hunters came from afar and searched for Muhammad (saw) and Abu Bakr far and wide, over mountains, valleys and deserts, but without any success. Some of them even reached the mouth of the cave of Thaur.

Imaam Bukhari reported on the authority of Anas that Abu Bakr Siddique said, *"I was with the Prophet of Allah (saw) in the cave and when I raised my head I saw the feet of some people and I said to the Prophet (saw) 'If they just lower their heads and look this way, they will see us.' He said, 'O Abu Bakr be silent and don't worry. Of the two of us the third is Allah (swt).'"* With this they passed by, not uncovering the caves inhabitants. This

was just a single miracle amongst numerous others that Allah (swt) had blessed upon the Prophet (saw) during his Prophethood. The bounty hunters were unsuccessful in their search for the Prophet and Abu Bakr and after three days the Quraysh assumed that they had by now reached Madinah. Muhammad (saw) hired Abdullah Ibn Urayqit Al-Laythe, a guide to take them to Madinah. Abdullah brought two camels with him for them to escape. Asma' came one last time to the cave and brought provisions with her that the Prophet (saw) and her father could take with them on their journey. As they mounted their camels she realised that she had forgotten to bring anything to tie them to the camels. She looked down to her waist and saw her belt. She took this and cut it into two and used the pieces to tie the food and water together. Ever since this incident, Asma' became known as *"the lady of two half ropes."*

On the night of their escape, at the beginning of Rabi Al-Awwal in the first year of Hijrah, the group started their journey heading south out of Makkah towards Yemen and then towards the mountains of Tihamat close to shores of the Red Sea. From here they took a road leading northwards towards Madinah taking an unfrequented path to reach their destination.

On the Journey to Madinah

It is reported in Saheeh Bukhari on the authority of Abu Bakr Siddique that he said, *"We left during the night (and travelled) until the next day, when the sun was at its meridian. Whereupon we saw a large rock with much shade and we stopped and rested besides it. I prepared a place for the Prophet to sleep, and said, 'O Prophet of Allah (saw) sleep and I will stay guard and protect you.' He slept and whenever any sand was blown towards him I removed it. I saw a shepherd, who came close to us wanting to rest in the shade we had as well. I said to him, 'Who are you?' He replied, 'I am a man from Madinah travelling to Makkah,' I asked, 'Do you have any sheep?' He replied, 'Yes.' I said to him, 'Are you willing to milk them?' He agreed and then took*

one udder and I said to him, 'Please clean it from any sand.' He did so and milked the sheep collecting it into a container which I carried to the Prophet (saw), who drank from it. I then asked the shepherd, 'Do you have any water?' he affirmed that he did and he gave us some water and I performed Wudu. I came to the Prophet (saw) who had finished drinking the milk and he also made Wudu. After this I paid the man and he left us."

Abu Bakr was always concerned for the safety of Muhammad (saw). He would always make sure that the Prophet would experience as little hardship as possible during his journey. His love and devotion towards Muhammad (saw) was unparalleled by any other of the companions. It is related in Saheeh Bukhari that Abu Bakr would usually walk behind the Prophet (saw) whenever they were walking together. However, when they left the cave of Thawr, Abu Bakr would often walk around Muhammad (saw), circling him. It is reported that he said, *"O Apostle of Allah (saw)! Whenever I am worried that those people (in pursuit of us) may come in front of you, I move in front and protect you with my shield, after that ideas come into my head that they may approach from the right, so I move to the right (of you) and if I think they may attack from the left I move to the left."*

Whilst on the journey, many Bedouins and others from Madinah would pass by the two. Many of them knew Abu Bakr, as he was an active tradesman known as a result of the success of his business. It is reported that Abu Bakr said, *"I was a person known by the people; the Prophet of Allah (swt) was unknown by the people (on their journey). A man approached us on our journey to Madinah and said to me, 'Who is this with you?' I replied, 'This man shows me the way.' This is how I was in a position to protect the Prophet on many occasions. A man from the Quraysh also came to me and said, 'Are you Abu Bakr?' I said 'Yes'. He said, 'Who is this man with you?' I replied, 'This is the man who guides me,' so the man left thinking that Muhammad (saw) was a guide."*

The Story of Suraqah Bin Malik Bin Ju'shum

After some time the search for Muhammad (saw) was scaled down with the Quraysh believing for certain he (saw) had escaped. However, the reward remained hanging over their heads. Many of the bounty hunters gave up chase and returned to Makkah. Amongst them however, was Suraqah Bin Malik from the tribe of Bani Mu'aligh. He insisted that the cause was not lost and still motivated by the five hundred camel reward redoubled his efforts to capture both of the fugitives. He sat and pondered about the prized reward, when one traveller from Bani Majlis, who had just arrived in Makkah, said to him, *"O Suraqah! I recently saw the signs of travellers on my journey near the shore (of the Red Sea); nobody usually travels on that route."* Suraqah replied, trying to dissuade the thought that this could be Muhammad and his Companion, *'No - it cannot be them! They cannot be there!'*

Suraqah prepared himself to embark on this expedition. He sold all of his possessions including his house and servants and he even divorced his wife in fear that whilst away someone may dishonour her. With this wealth he purchased the finest horse he could find, armed himself with his spear, and went to the Ka'bah, where he consulted the Idols. He wrote on two pages the words 'do' and 'do not do' and then asked the Idols to answer. The command, 'do not do' was revealed. As Suraqah had set his heart on this mission he disobeyed the order and instead departed in search of Muhammad (saw) and Abu Bakr.

Suraqah galloped to the reported location where they were last seen and inquired from the people whether they had seen any unusual travellers. He continued to ride his horse on the route to Madinah until all of a sudden his mare stopped abruptly and threw him off his saddle. He rose from the ground and remounted his horse not giving it a second thought and rode off again. Again, his horse stumbled for a second time, launching him from his seat. Suraqah remounted his horse and continued to push on until he caught sight of three men. Feeling a

sense of anticipation, he urged his horse forward towards the party, but his horse rejected and stumbled for the third time, falling to the ground with its rider, Suraqah. His horse then began to sink into the sand and became stuck, with the sand reaching up to its knees.

Suraqah dismounted his horse, bewildered and mystified by the incident. Unsure as to what had happened; Suraqah asked the idols for direction using the same rituals as before. Again, he received the same reply. Realising that the Prophet (saw) had some sort of protection against him he shouted out, *"Give me your security. I want to speak with you,"* They offered him the security he desired. He continued, *"O Muhammad! For some reason something prevents me from meeting you and I have never feared anybody the way I fear you at this moment! Your people have promised a lot of money for the one who could arrest you. I could have informed them of your location, but I have not yet done so, as I want you to come with me so that I can claim the reward (alone)."*

Muhammad (saw) replied, *"O Suraqah! How much do they offer to you for you to arrest me?"* He replied, *"Some of them offered two hundred, some of them offered one hundred for each of you. However, in total I gathered over seven hundred camels. O Muhammad! You should know that I have divorced my wife and I have left her to take my children and I have sold my house! I have done all of this just so that I could capture you."* Muhammad (saw) said, *"Indeed, you know that you cannot capture me. O Suraqah! If you leave us and promise not to speak to anyone, in return I will offer you something."* He said, *"I cannot leave you!"* The Messenger (saw) continued, *"What if I promise you if you leave us alone, you will get that what is good for you in this life and in the hereafter, Jannah (Paradise)."* Angered by this response Suraqah cried out, *"No! You can keep it! I want something in this life!"* Muhammad (saw) said, *"What if I write for you a seal (guarantee) that you will get the crown and the two bracelets of the Chosroes (from the King of Persia)?"* Doubting the Prophet (saw) he responded, *"Do you speak the truth?"* Muhammad (saw) replied, *"Have I ever lied?"* He answered,

"No." Suraqah took the warrant believing that nothing would come of it.

Later in Islamic history, when Umar bin Al-Khattab sent Salman Al-Farasi (ra) to wage Jihad against the Persians, he returned victorious. As they lay claim to the booty Umar (ra) said to Salman (ra), *"Do not forget! Allow Suraqah Bin Malik to be the first one to enter when you collect the crown and the two bracelets (from Persia). Let him be amongst you."* As they entered, Salman offered Suraqah to sit on the Persian King's throne and to wear the crown and bracelet. About this incident Suraqah reported, *"I became surprised and began to cry. People asked me 'Why are you crying?' I said 'You do not understand how much this crown and two bracelets cost me!' They asked, 'Did you buy them?' I said, 'The Prophet offered me something greater than this and there is no comparison in price.' They continued, 'What was that?' I said, 'He offered me paradise and I said to him keep it with you so then he offered me the crown and two bracelet of Chosroes. I never understood at the time! I was (still) in Jahiliyyah."*

Suraqah unselfishly donated all of his new earned wealth to the believers; cursing himself for not choosing Paradise over the worldly materialistic pleasures of life. During his confrontation with the Prophet (saw) Suraqah Bin Malik was a Mushrik and not a believer so his aspirations were based on wealth and materialism, rather than the desire to please Allah (swt) or to seek paradise. However, when Suraqah embraced Islam, his viewpoint on life changed dramatically and now his sole intention was to seek the pleasure of Allah (swt).

Passing by the Tent of Abu Ma'bad

During the Hijrah of Muhammad (saw) and Abu Bakr, they passed by the camp of Umm Ma'bad, a hospitable woman of Khuza'a. She was well known to look after and feed travellers on their journey to and from Madinah. They asked her whether she had any provisions that she could offer them, she responded, *"If I have anything I will not hide it from*

you." The Prophet (saw) then looked at the female sheep near the tent and said, *"What about this sheep, O Umm M'abad?"* She replied, *"Look at it! She is very thin and does not have any milk."* Muhammad (saw) replied, *"Do you permit me to try (and milk it)?"* She answered, *"Do as you wish. If you find that she has milk then milk her."*

Muhammad (saw) touched the udder which had dried up due to the drought and uttered, *"In the name of Allah (swt)"* and began to make Du'a, suddenly milk started to flow from the sheep. He said to Umm Ma'bad, *"Bring me a plate large enough for a group of people."* He continued to milk the sheep, collecting it in a container, until it became full to the brim. He asked for another and filled this as well. The milk was offered to the women of Khuza'a and then to the rest of the people present and those passing by. Finally, he (saw) and Abu Bakr also drank from the plate. Muhammad (saw) milked the sheep for a second time, again filling the container and left this with Umm Ma'bad. When her husband, Abu Ma'bad returned with a couple of thin goats, he found the large vessel full of milk and asked his wife, *"How did you get this, when I do not have any sheep capable of milking?"* She recalled the incident that occurred. Her husband replied, *"I think he is the man Quraysh seek."* He continued, *"Describe him to me."* She described his character, his appearance and the manner of his speech using only the finest words. She said, *"He speaks only with words that, whenever anybody listens to him they would enjoy doing so."* Abu Ma'bad said, *"By God! That is the man the Quraysh seek. They mention his character, if I see him I will accompany him and if I have a chance to go with him to be his companion, I will do so."* He then went outside and thanked Allah (swt) that He (swt) had let Muhammad (saw) pass by their tent. In the morning, people who witnessed the incident wrote poetry about the episode, expressing how Muhammad (saw) brought blessings upon their people. The poems were passed by word of mouth until the news spread to the people in Makkah.

Asma', the daughter of Abu Bakr who had remained in Makkah, said, *"We never knew which direction the Prophet of Allah (saw) took until a man from Makkah came and recited these poems. In the poems he described a person who came to Umm Ma'bad, what he did, how his character was and how he touched the sheep and said, 'Go and ask the sheep, the sheep will testify.' Verily the sheep testified and people in Makkah realised that the man who passed that area was in fact Muhammad (saw). So we realised from this which direction the Prophet (saw) took towards Madinah."*

Meeting Abu Buraydah and Zubair

On the way to Madinah Muhammad (saw) encountered Abu Buraydah, the leader of his tribe Banu Sahm. He was a man also seeking Muhammad (saw) and Abu Bakr with the intention of claiming the reward, which the Quraysh offered for their capture.

When Buraydah met the Prophet (saw) he (saw) spoke with him and invited him to Islam. Buraydah embraced Islam and as he was the leader of his tribe, 70 other men also converted. He removed his turban from his head and tied it to his spear; then he raised his hand and threw it onto the ground symbolising that the Messenger of peace and security had come to establish justice on the Earth. After this they left and eventually came across Zubair who was travelling with a group of Muslims all of whom were businessmen travelling to As-Sham. They generously offered some white clothes for Muhammad (saw) and Abu Bakr to wear as they entered into Madinah.

The Prophet Enters Madinah

The 12 officers from those who gave the Bay'ah to Muhammad (saw) placed Madinah in a state of emergency. With each officer was a group of men who were equipped with an array of weapons that were available to them. They wore the skin of wolves to set themselves apart from the civilians of Madinah and as a sign to the people that Madinah was under siege. No-one was able to enter nor leave Madinah without the permission of the 12 officers. When the Mushriks saw the 12 officers and their army surrounding Yathrib they realised that the Muslims had conceived a plot to take power. Abdullah Ibn Ubayd Ibn Salloul, the person next in line to be king in Yathrib said, *"Look at those people! They are preventing people from coming in or going out without their permission! They are taking power! This matter (must) have been prepared at the dead of night."* Everyone in Madinah wondered what the purpose of the 12 officers were; but the Muslims were fully aware that they were there to protect Muhammad (saw) when he (saw) finally arrived and to give him the power over the city.

Al-Ansaar Await the Prophet

On the 8th of Rabi Ul-Awwal, 14 years after the start of Prophethood, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) and Abu Bakr reached the outskirts of Madinah entering into Quba. By now, the Muslims in Madinah were aware that the Messenger (saw) had left Makkah, and they would travel to the outskirts of Yathrib, peering towards the hills, waiting for him (saw) to arrive. One day, a Jew from amongst the inhabitants of Yathrib caught sight of two men wearing white clothes approaching on the routes towards Madinah. He shouted to the people, *"O Arabs! Your luck is in (with) the one you await! There is your lucky one (approaching)!"*

When the 12 officers surrounding the city heard the news, they gazed out looking for the travelling party. When they caught sight of them they began to make Takbir shouting, *"Allah (swt) is great!"* The Muslim residents in the city heard this and rushed out of their homes to see the Prophet (saw), and they also began to make Takbir. The Ansar then opened all the routes to the city waiting for the Prophet (saw) to enter. As the people of Yathrib approached Abu Bakr and Muhammad (saw), they found them resting beneath a tree. Abu Bakr rose to greet them and they began to crowd around him thinking him to be the Apostle (saw). As Abu Bakr moved forward the rays of the sun shone upon Muhammad (saw) and he turned around and shielded the light from him (saw). This signalled to the people that he was not actually the Prophet (saw); as the Prophet had been seated on the ground.

Muhammad (saw) remained in Quba in the house of Khulthum Bin Hathim for a short while. Ali Bin Abu Taalib remained in Makkah for a further three days until he subsequently also made Hijrah whereupon he reached Quba and stayed at the same house that Muhammad (saw)

had resided in. The Messenger (saw) stayed in Quba for four days where he established the foundations of a new mosque; the first Masjid to be built in Islam. He (saw) left on the fifth day and approached Banu Salin Bin Auf'; therewith he performed the first Friday prayer with a hundred in the congregation. After the Friday prayers, Muhammad (saw) left for the main city of Madinah, which was known amongst the Arabs as the city of Yathrib, but on the arrival of the Messenger Muhammad (saw), it was renamed as '*the City of the Prophet (saw) of Allah (swt)*', Al-Madinah.

The 'Procession' Into Madinah

The day that Muhammad (saw) entered the heart of Madinah was recorded in history as the day that Islam had at long last been established and the day that the Leader returned to his people to rule solely by Islam and to bring justice to all. It marked the change from the implementation of Kufr, to the implementation of Islam, which made the Mushriks in Makkah shudder, fearing at the inevitability that one day Muhammad (saw) would reclaim the land that he was born in. All the people in Madinah were celebrating in their houses, on their rooftops and on the streets, jubilant, as their Prophet had finally arrived. The women of the Ansar sang, *"By the moon that rises in the middle of the day over us, We can see it from the hills of Thani and Daa, We are obliged to be thankful to Allah (swt) and to respond to whatever the Messenger (saw) of Allah (swt) calls us to, O the one who has been sent with the Message for us! Verily we will abide with the commands you bring!"*

At that time the Ansar were not the wealthiest people in Madinah and at times did not even have sufficient food for their own families, yet each person wished that the Apostle (saw) would lodge with them and come and visit their homes. Whenever he rode by a house of the Ansar they would take hold of his camel's reins and say, *"Live with us. We have food; we have wealth; we have safety."* But he (saw) replied to them all, *"Leave my camel. There is no need to direct it. Allah (swt) will order it where*

to go.” Muhammad (saw) remained on his camel allowing it to move in any direction until she halted at a place and sat down. The Prophet (saw) did not dismount immediately and the camel rose moving away then returning again to the same spot. This event was repeated for a third time, until the camel decided to sit and rest at the same location. On the third occasion, Muhammad (saw) finally descended from his camel and decided to establish Al Masjid Al-Nabawi at this spot, purchasing the land from the two orphans of Banu Al-Najjar, Sahl and Suhayl ibnu Amr. Allah (swt) honoured his Messenger Muhammad (saw) by allowing him to construct the mosque of Madinah and his home at the place where the family of his mother had once resided.

The Prophet Resides in the House of Abu Ayyub Ansari Bin Zayd

As Muhammad (saw) dismounted from his camel people began to hug and greet him. The first person to do so was Abu Ayyub Ansari who, without delay, escorted the Messenger (saw) with his provisions to his home whilst Asad Bin Zurahah led the Prophet's camel away. The Prophet of Allah (saw) lodged in Abu Ayyub's house until he built Al-Masjid Al-Nabawi and besides it, his own modest house attached to the mosque.

Abu Ayyub Ansari reported that, *“When the Prophet of Allah (saw) was in my house he stayed on the ground floor and Umm Ayyub and I resided on the first floor. I said to him (saw), ‘O Apostle of Allah (saw), I would sacrifice my mother and father for you! I hate the fact that I am above you and you on the ground level under me. Please, you can stay above and we will go below.’ Muhammad (saw) replied, ‘O Abu Ayyub! It will be more convenient for people who want to visit me and easier for you if I stay on the ground floor.’ So the Prophet of Allah (saw) remained on the bottom level and we stayed above. Once we broke a pot of water on the above level. I and Umm Ayyub mopped up the water with a blanket in fear that it would drop and leak onto the Prophet (saw) and bring harm to him. We would make the food and send it to him. Whatever he left behind, I and Umm Ayyub would eat from the same place as*

he was eating from, in order to get blessings. We found that the food (he left) would never finish."

The Remaining Few Migrate to Madinah

A few days following the arrival of Muhammad (saw), his wives Sauda and A'iesha (ra), his two daughters Fatima and Umm Kulthum, Usama Ibn Zaid and Umm Ayman, and Abdullah Bin Abu Bakr reached Madinah. Zaynab was forced to remain in Makkah by Abdul A'rse until she was able to perform the Hijrah alone after the battle of Badr. Ibn Ishaq narrates, *"The Muhajireen (the emigrants from Makkah) began to leave one after another, until there was nobody left in Makkah from the Muslims save for the people who had either been imprisoned, were unable to leave due to dangers and hardship or (those that) had been misled."*

When Muhammad (saw) entered Madinah he immediately set about transforming Yathrib into Madinah Al-Munawwarrah, from Dar Al-Kufr to Dar Al-Islam. He first built and established Al-Masjid Al-Nabawi, the main headquarters of the Islamic State, which played the central role in dealing with the affairs of the Muslims. Secondly he reinforced the brotherhood between the Ansar and Muhajireen, by asking the Ansar to share half of their wealth, their land and even their wives with those that had emigrated from Makkah; resolving the economic crisis facing the Muslims in Madinah. Thirdly he drafted the constitution of Madinah for all to follow, establishing law and order to society.

All of the measures undertaken by Muhammad (saw) illustrated how he (saw) entered Madinah as the undisputed leader of the Muslims as well as the people of the city. Thus removing any notion that he (saw) entered as a fleeing refugee due to persecution and torture by the inhabitants of Makkah. Being one of the last few emigrants from Makkah, we can understand that he (saw) was concerned for the safety of his companions, and wanted for them to leave before he did, ensuring their safe passage.

This is in marked contrast to the actions of the so-called Muslim leaders existing today, which many of the government preachers would like us to honour as being the *Amir ul-Mu'mineen* – 'The leader of the Muslims', a title held by the Prophet (saw). In the early 1990's, when the Iraqi army first entered into Kuwait, the ruling family Al-Subah where the first to vacate the country on the advice of the Americans, and left their population to fight on their behalf. How can these traitors, who do not follow the example of the Prophet (saw) and have no love for Islam nor for the Shar'iah, be our leaders? How are we expected to obey them and follow them, when they command and rule by Kufr?

Building Al-Masjid Al-Nabawi

Immediately after the land had been purchased from the orphans of Al-Najjar, construction of the mosque began. The Muslims set about clearing the site, as upon it lay the burial ground and graves of the Mushriks. Muhammad (saw) ordered the graves to be moved with their bones and that the land be levelled; he then asked for the date and palm trees to be cut, for the construction of the Mosque to commence.

The mosque built was modest and simple in design; lacking the excessive decoration and colouration we have today. Using the branches of date trees and the leaves of palm trees Muhammad (saw) constructed the roof covering a small portion of the mosque, the remainder was left open to the heavens. The mosque's pillars were made from stone; the walls were of a mud brick composition, while the courtyard was laid with dry rubble and clean sand. Three entrances to the mosque were constructed; two of which were found on the same side, whilst the last faced the direction of the *Qiblah*, which was at that time Baytul Maqdis. The length and width of the Mosque was of one hundred arm lengths. Beside it they built two rooms which were inhabited by the Prophet's (saw) wives.

Muhammad (saw) played an active role in the building of the Mosque, working alongside the rest of the Muslims. He would carry bricks, rocks and mud to the construction site while repeating, *'O our Lord! There is no real life except the life of the Hereafter. O our Lord! Forgive the Ansar and the Muhajireen.'* He would also say, *'What we carry here is better than the one who carries to the Ka'bah, this is more pure and Allah (swt) will give much reward.'* By reciting these words Muhammad (saw) would encourage and intensify the Muslims enthusiasm to construct the mosque. They would often say when they saw the Prophet (saw) helping them, *'And if we sit whilst the Prophet (saw) is working, indeed (then) all that we do is misguided (worth nothing).'*

The Role of the Mosque

In Islam, the Mosque was never built solely for the five daily prayers; rather it incorporated numerous roles. It was used by the Prophet as the Headquarters of the Islamic state, where ambassadors from other countries and nations would meet the Leader of the Muslims. It represented the education department of the state, being the centre for teaching, as it was a university and a library, where people would come and gain knowledge about Islam and read about the world. It also represented the Judicial department, being a Shari'ah court solving disputes between the people, as well as the Jihad department where military training and war strategies were formed. Besides all this, it was a community centre where people would meet together and converse and it was also a place where marriages were conducted.

Establishing the Brotherhood

The leader of the Islamic state is obliged to ensure that he can cater for the welfare and affairs of the people by providing them security and tranquility whereby they can fulfil their organic needs and instincts. These duties are described in the Qur'an,

فَلْيَعْبُدُوا رَبَّ هَذَا الْبَيْتِ الَّذِي أَطْعَمَهُمْ مِنْ جُوعٍ وَآمَنَهُمْ مِنْ خَوْفٍ

“So let them worship (Allah) he Lord of this House (the Ka’bah in Makkah), (He) Who has fed them against hunger (by satisfying their needs), and has made them safe from fear (by providing them security).”¹⁶⁸

Allah (swt) has ordered this duty on the Leader of the Muslims to be carried out in this World, since in the hereafter there will be no need for security nor food, as everything will be provided for. However, these requirements cannot be brought about by themselves in this life; rather they require funds, capital and a system for them to be established. Muhammad (saw) realised that in order to let the Muhajireen and the Ansar live in a society where he could cater for their needs and provide them with security, wealth would need to be generated. Instead of loaning money from the Quraysh or from the Roman and Persian Empires, which would have resulted in a dependency of the Islamic state on these nations, he asked the Ansar to share their wealth with their Muslim brothers, the Muhajireen, who had left their land, wealth and their families in pursuit of the Pleasure of Allah (swt). Muhammad (saw) paired individuals from the Ansar, who resided in Madinah, with individuals of the Muhajireen, who migrated from Makkah, explaining to them the responsibilities of the brotherhood. This was known as ‘the action of the brotherhood’ or *Muakhalaat*.

The *Muakhalaat* was not solely a concept that the Muslims were a Brotherhood; it was in fact a manifestation of this belief in practical action, and satisfied the needs of the poor Muslims by bringing together people of wealth with those who lacked it. Ibnu Qayyum reported that, “He (saw) made them (Ansar and Muhajireen) a brotherhood and gathered them both in the courtyard of Anas Bin Malik, there were all together 90 men, half from the Muhajireen and half from the Ansar.” Muhammad (saw)

stated his plan to them and told them that they would share half of their property and wealth; they will inherit from each other, despite not having any blood relationship between them. He also asked the Ansar that if someone had more than one wife he should divorce one wife for his brother. They continued this Brotherhood until the day of Badr, after which Allah (swt) abrogated the inheritance between them by revealing the following ayah,

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِن بَعْدُ وَهَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا مَعَكُمْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مِنكُمْ وَأُولُوا
الْأَرْحَامِ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلَىٰ بِبَعْضٍ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

“And those who believed afterwards, and emigrated and strove hard along with you (in the Cause of Allah (swt)), they are of you. But Kindred by blood are nearer to one another (regarding inheritance) in the decree ordained by Allah (swt). Verily, Allah (swt) is the All Knower of everything.”¹⁶⁹

By implementing Muakalaat, Muhammad (saw) ensured that the Islamic state was economically and politically independent from any foreign control. This meant that other governments would not be able to dictate nor put down any agenda on the Muslim land and that the state would be financially self-sufficient, allowing the country to grow uninhibited by any loans or conditions that a foreign government could impose.

The Muakhalaat demonstrated the immense wisdom of Muhammad (saw); it had political, economic and social ramifications on the society. Politically, it unified the Muslims, making each other's affair their concern; economically the money of the rich was circulated in society and filtered through to the poorer people; socially it destroyed any

¹⁶⁸ Al-Qur'an – Surah Quraysh, 106:3-4

¹⁶⁹ Al-Qur'an – Surah Al-Anfaal, 8:75

notion of a class system in Yathrib, since everybody would be sharing from each other.

The Story of 'Abd ar-Rahman Ibn Awf and Sa'd Ibn Rabi'

Imaam Bukhari reported that, "The Prophet Muhammad (saw) established Muakalaat (the action of brotherhood) between the people of Madinah, the Ansar, and the Muhajireen. He made Muakalaat between Abd Ar Rahman Ibn Awf and Sa'd Ibn Rabi'. Sa'd said to Abd ar-Rahman Ibn Awf, *'I am the richest man of the Ansar, so take half of my money and I have two wives, look at each one of them and whichever one you like more tell me and I will divorce her for you, and when her period has finished you will marry her.'* Sa'd said, *'May Allah (swt) bless you and your family and your money, but tell me, where is your market place?'* So the people directed him to the market of Banu Qaynuqa. He went there with a small amount of cheese and butter and began trading. After a few days he returned with some gold. The Prophet (saw) said to him, *'What can I see with you? I see that you look different.'* He said, *'I have just got married.'* He (saw) said, *'How much dowry did you pay her?'* He replied, *'A piece of gold.'*"

The Muslims who did not know how to trade in the market took to farming the land owned by the Ansar, in a system established by the Prophet (saw) called share-cropping. The emigrants who were unable to do this and were so poor that they did not even have a place to sleep, were assigned a place in the mosque where they could reside and for this reason became known as *"Ahl Al-Suffah"*. They were also given a portion of wealth from the Muslims in Yathrib to cater for their basic needs.

These examples demonstrate a new found solidarity, which encompassed all the Muslims, a brotherhood that extended beyond simple words and emotions but rather was expressed in action. The Muslims of the Ansar never hesitated nor questioned the Prophet (saw)

about his decision; rather they accepted it without any spite, understanding that their provision was from Allah (swt) and that by doing so, it was another opportunity for them to please their Lord.

The Constitution

After establishing the Headquarters of the Islamic state, Al-Masjid Al-Nabawi, and setting up the brotherhood, Muhammad (saw) drafted the Constitution. Its purpose was to bring law and order to the citizens of the state, as well as to eradicate tribalism and nationalism from the hearts and minds of the Muslims. It also aimed to remove the corruption found in the market place that existed in the time of the Jahiliyyah.

As reported in Saheeh Bukhari, the constitution began, *"In the Name of Allah, Ar-Rahman Ar-Raheem. This is the document written by Muhammad the Prophet (saw) between the believers of the Quraysh and Yathrib and those who follow them, those who joined them and fight with them."*

The Constitution read as follows:

1. They (the Muslims) are all one (single) Ummah, beside all others.
2. The Muhajireen from Quraysh are bound together and will look after each other and will pay blood money if one of them is killed unintentionally and if anyone of them were to become a prisoner they shall ransom their prisoners in kindness and justice as believers do. And the people from the Ansar shall look after their own members of their tribes. They shall look after each other, and if anyone of them commits a crime unintentionally, they will pay the blood money for the individual and each of the group shall ransom their prisoners and help each other.

3. The believers shall leave none of their own members in destitution and poverty without giving him in kindness what he needs by way of ransom or blood money.
4. The believers must unite against whosoever rebels or seeks to spread injustice or take money or commit aggression or corruption upon the believers.
5. They should all stand together (as one) to support each other and to stop the people who spread injustice whoever they may be; even if they are from amongst themselves.
6. No believer shall slay a believer in retaliation for the life of a non-believer.
7. Nor shall we favour or support a non -believer over a believer.
8. The People of the Covenant of the Ahl ul Zimah are one and any Muslim can accept Zimah from anyone.
9. Any Jew who follows us shall gain our support and the same rights as any one of us. He shall not be wronged nor his enemy assisted.
10. The peace between the believers is one. It shall not be allowed for any of the believers to enter into a separate peace accord with the non-believers when they (the believers) are engaged in fighting for the sake of Allah, except if they have a just agreement on the basis of the Shari'ah.
11. The believers are equal to each other in what they may earn as a result of the booty from the battlefield.

12. The believers shall support each other and will seek out those who have taken money (forcefully) from them or the money of the state in order to return their *Huqooq* (Islamic rights).
13. It is not allowed for the Mushriks to give refuge to anybody from the Quraysh nor to take any money from them and not even to prevent the Muslims cutting their relationships with the kafir from them.
14. Whoever kills a believer deliberately without a Shari'ah permit shall be liable to the killed relatives to be killed; except if they accept the equivalent blood recompense.
15. The believers shall unite against those who wish to rise against Islam or rise against the believers and they will not be allowed to remain (in Madinah) and shall be expelled.
16. It is not allowed for a believer to support a Mushrik nor is it allowed to receive or give them support; whoever does so will gain the Curse of Allah and His Anger on the Day of Judgement and He (swt) will never accept any of his actions from him.
17. To the people of the covenant, no matter to what degree you differ amongst yourselves, the final decision must be referred back to the Qur'an and the authority of Muhammad (saw).

Having now established the State of Tawheed in Madinah, recorded the constitution and provided security and tranquillity for its inhabitants, the time had now come for the state to expand its borders to fulfil the true purpose of the message;

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ
الْمُشْرِكُونَ

*"It is He who sent down the Messenger with guidance and the
Deen of Al-Haqq in order to conquer over all other Ways of
life even if the Mushriks (disbelievers) detest it."*¹⁷⁰

¹⁷⁰ Al-Qur'an – Surah At-Tauba, 9:33

Conclusion

The life of Muhammad (saw) from the time of Prophethood until the establishment of the first Islamic Authority, indeed until his (saw) death, is a period of immense importance to the Muslim. Notwithstanding the fact that during this era mankind was blessed with the presence of the Prophet (saw) in person, the implementation of Allah's (swt) Law, Decree and Decision was to be found on the earth; and the struggle to vanquish Shirk in all forms was instigated.

The period of Revelation was a turbulent time for the Messenger Muhammad (saw). Despite being given the pedestal of the 'Guider' and the 'bringer of glad tidings' for mankind, and being chosen by Allah (swt) Himself as the best of creation, Muhammad (saw) had to endure the suffering, torture and attempts on his life, as the previous prophets and messengers before him underwent.

In spite of these great pressures, and the huge responsibility of being a Prophet from Allah (swt), Muhammad (saw) never complained to Allah about his situation. Rather, as we can recall from his momentous Du'a following the trials of At-Ta'if, he (saw) would say, *"O my Lord! To You I turn for my weaknesses and the shortcomings of my ways, being ridiculed by the people. O Ar-Rahman, you are the Lord of the weak, you are my Lord. To whom do you leave my affairs, an enemy who is in charge over my affairs? O my Lord! if you are not angry with me, I do not mind. I seek your refuge and Mercy. I ask you by the Nur of your 'Wajh' which extinguishes all of the darkness to light and through which all the affairs of the earth have been settled, I ask you not to send your Anger and punishment onto me. I will*

continue to call until you are satisfied. Verily there is no strength or power except from You."

Indeed there are great lessons for mankind to learn from the Messenger Muhammad (saw) and his companions. In fact, for the believers, there can be no role model nor any other example for them to take except that of Muhammad (saw); since Allah (swt) has commanded the Muslims;

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ
وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

"Indeed in the Messenger of Allah you have the best example for him who looks to Allah and the last Day and remembers Allah much."¹⁷¹

Muhammad (saw's) life is the perfect rendition of the battle between Haqq - 'absolute truth' and Baatil - 'falsehood'; a momentous struggle that began from the very moment Iblees disobeyed Allah (swt). His (saw's) life gives the Muslims hope and aspirations for the restoration of the Islamic Authority and the return to peace, safety and tranquility for all of mankind, both Muslim and non-Muslim. However, with this comes a warning not to be fainthearted; a warning to be firm and to be consistent on the truth with an uncompromising stance; a warning that to be a Believer is not an easy matter. Rather, those who believe in Islam and wish to carry it '*ala minhaja rasoolulilah*' - on the way of the Prophet (saw), will endure extreme suffering, humiliation, ridicule, boycott and eventual assassination or imprisonment. As Allah (swt) has warned those who wish to tread this path;

أَحْسِبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا آمَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ

¹⁷¹ Al-Qur'an - Surah Al-Ahzaab, 33:21

*"Do people think that they will be left alone because they say,
'We believe' and will not be tested?"¹⁷²*

And also again in Surah Al-Baqarah,

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ
وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ
*"And for a certainty, We shall test you with something of
fear, hunger, loss of wealth, lives and fruits, but give glad
tidings to the patient. Who, when afflicted with a calamity
say, 'Indeed, to Allah we belong and to He (swt) we shall
return'"¹⁷³*

From those in our lifetime, those sincere 'Ulema, who have the honour, but also the huge responsibility, of being the 'Inheritors of the Prophet', the likes of Sheikh Umar Abdur-Rahman and that of Sheikh Abdul Hameed Al-Kiskh before him, those sincere Mujahideen like Sheikh Usama bin Laden and Sheikh Abdullah Azzam and the numerous Islamists throughout the world, who have embarked upon and chosen the way of the Prophet (saw) and his companions; we can see that this path is naught else but a path of struggle, of hardship and sacrifice.

Yet, Allah (swt) being *al-Kaamil* has balanced all things, good and evil, true and false. He (swt) has promised victory and support for those who have earned victory and support and He (swt) has also promised death and destruction for those who have earned and deserved death and destruction. For the believers, Allah (swt) has promised authority in this earth;

¹⁷² Al-Qur'an - Surah Al-Ankaboot, 29:2

¹⁷³ Al-Qur'an - Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:155-156

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا
 اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَى لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُمْ
 مِنْ بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا وَمَنْ كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ
 فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ

“Allah has promised those among you who believe and do righteous good deeds, that He will certainly grant them succession to (the present rulers) in the land, as He granted to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practise their Deen which He has chosen for them (i.e. Islam). And He will for a surety, give them in exchange a safe security after their fear (provided) they (the believers) worship Me and do not associate with Me. But whoever disbelieved after this, they are the Fasiqoon (rebellious, disobedient to Allah).”¹⁷⁴

And for the Hereafter, Allah (swt) has promised eternal happiness and serenity;

قُلْ أَذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ أَمْ جَنَّةُ الْخُلْدِ الَّتِي وُعِدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ كَانَتْ لَهُمْ جَزَاءً وَمَصِيرًا
 لَهُمْ فِيهَا مَا يَشَاءُونَ خَالِدِينَ كَانَ عَلَى رَبِّكَ وَعْدًا مَسْئُورًا

“Say: (O Muhammad (saw)) ‘Is that (torment) better or the Paradise of Eternity which is promised to the Mutaqoun (pious and righteous persons)?’ It will be theirs as a reward and as a final destination. For them there will be therein all that they desire, and they will abide (there forever). It is a promise binding upon your Lord that must be fulfilled.”¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁴ Al-Qur’an - Surah An-Noor, 24:55

¹⁷⁵ Al-Qur’an - Surah Al -Furqaan 25:15-16

The call to establish the Islamic Authority, or the Khilafah, is neither a new phenomenon, nor a Bid'ah. Rather the greatest person to grace this earth, Muhammad (saw) carried this call and the honourable, sincere and trustworthy companions continued this duty. If indeed, we love Allah (swt) then we will follow the Messenger Muhammad (saw). As Allah (swt) has said,

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ
رَحِيمٌ

*"Say: (O Muhammad (saw)) If you love Allah, follow me and Allah will love you."*¹⁷⁶

The historic life of the Messenger Muhammad (saw) must not be taken as simple stories that we tell our children. Nor should it be taken as an ideal that cannot be fulfilled. Rather, this life story *must* be taken as the only blueprint, the only manual on how to be a Muslim, a servant of Allah (swt) and a human being. The life of Muhammad (saw) highlights to us that victory is always on the side of the Believers and is within our grasp if only we embark on it.

O Muslim Ummah! It is about time to return back to the Qur'an and the Sunnah and rule and judge by them alone. It is about time to implement the commandments of Allah (swt) both in our own personal lives and upon the lives of others. Allah (swt) has ordered the believers;

وَأَنِ احْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَاحْذَرْهُمْ أَنْ يَفْتِنُوكَ عَنْ
بَعْضِ مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُصِيبَهُمْ
بِبَعْضِ
ذُنُوبِهِمْ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ النَّاسِ لَفَاسِقُونَ

¹⁷⁶ Al-Qur'an - Surah Ale-Imraan, 3:31

*"So rule and judge between them by that which Allah has revealed, and follow not their desires, but beware of them lest they seduce you from some part of that which Allah has revealed unto you."*¹⁷⁷

O Muslims! Forgo the calls of the secularists and deviated ones; those who are the Munafiqs¹⁷⁸ of the era. Those who are not satisfied with the purity and clarity of the Qur'an and wish naught else but to follow their own desires and the call of the Kuffar which is but the call of the Shayateen and the road to Jahannam.

O Muslims! Allah (swt) does not burden anyone of us more than we can undertake. Therefore, all the commandments Allah (swt) has ordered upon us, the same commandments He (swt) ordered upon the messenger and his companions, can be undertaken by each one of us.

O Muslims! The call for Islam, the call for Jihad, the call for Shari'ah has reached all corners of the globe. Be amongst those who carry this call, who struggle with this call, and insha'allah by Allah's (swt) Mercy, and Help, will establish this call. Then, and only then will all Kufr, all Fisq and all Munkaraat be vanquished and the earth will carry the pure Tawheed for which is had been created.

In conclusion, we leave the Messenger Muhammad (saw) to remind us of the *barakah* of this task: *"Some peoples will come on the Day of Judgement and their Imaan will be outstanding. Its light will shine from their chests and from their right hands. So it will be said to them, 'Glad tidings for you today! Assalaamu alaykum and goodness for you! Enter into it (Jannah) forever!' So*

¹⁷⁷ Al-Qur'an - Surah Al-Ma'idah, 5:49

¹⁷⁸ *Munafiq* - Those that practice *Nifaaq*. The one whose outer appearance is different to what they conceal inside. Used in context of those who claim to be Believers but in reality, their hearts despise Islam.

the Angels and the Prophets will be jealous of the love of Allah for them.” So the Sahabah asked, ‘Who are they, O Messenger of Allah?’

Muhammad (saw) replied, *“They are not from us and they are not from you. You are my companions but they are my beloved. They will come after you and will find the book (the Qur’an) made redundant by the people, and a Sunnah which has been killed by them. So they will grab hold of the book and the Sunnah and revive them. So they will read them and teach them (the Qur’an and the Sunnah) to the people and they will experience in that path a punishment more severe and more ugly than what you (O Sahabah) have experienced. Indeed, the Imaan of one of them is equivalent to the Imaan of forty of you. The Shaheed of one of them is equivalent to forty of your Shuhadaa’. Because you found a helper towards the truth (the Prophet (saw)) and they will find no helper towards the truth. So they will be surrounded by tyrant rulers in every place, and they will be in the surroundings of Bayt ul-Maqdis (al-Quds). The Nussrah (victorious material support) of Allah will come to them, and they will have the honour of it on their hands.”* Then he (saw) said, *“O Allah! Give them the Nussrah and make them my close friends in Jannah.”* [Musnad Imaam Ahmed]